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ABSTRACT

The focus of these two reports is on students who transferred from the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP), and who were studied as a part of the Maryland Longitudinal Study. Results found included the following: (1) transfers in the Representative Group (containing members of all ethnic groups) were equally likely to be male or female; in the Black Group, transfers were twice as likely to be female; academically, transfers were less well prepared; (2) grade point averages were lower and dissatisfaction was greater at the time of transfer; (3) in the Representative Group, transfers in year 2 began thinking about transferring relatively early in year 1; in the Black Group, somewhat later; (4) in the Representative Group, inability to meet academic requirements was the primary reason for leaving, followed by dissatisfaction with the social environment and inadquate financial resources; in the Black Group the same reasons were given, although financial concerns were rated second, followed by dissatisfaction with social life; (5) in year 2, significant numbers of transfer students went to area community colleges; in year 3, Representative Group transfers were more likely to go to other four-year institutions than Black Group transfers; (6) the majority of transfers reported being satisfied with their social lives at their new colleges or universities; (7) transfers appeared to be doing well academically at their new institutions; (8) working long hours appeared to ease to likelihood of dropping out for financial reasons; (9) substantial numbers of transfers appeared to be satisfied with their new institutions; and (10) the data suggest that Black transfers were more likely to continue to transfer after leaving UMCP and to attend two-year colleges. Research Report 4 contains 13 data tables; Research Report 6 contains 5 tables and an appendix. Between them, the 2 reports contain 9 references. (KM)

ED301102

MLS RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Maryland
Longitudinal Study

Research Report #4

STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM UMCP:
WHO ARE THEY? WHY DO THEY LEAVE?
WHERE DO THEY GO? Summer 1987

Research Report #6

STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM UMCP:
DO THEY FIND WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR? Fall 1987

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Maryland Longitudinal Study Steering Committee
Division of Student Affairs
The University of Maryland College Park

MLS

Maryland Longitudinal Study

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH REPORT #4

STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM UMCP: WHO ARE THEY? WHY DO THEY LEAVE? WHERE DO THEY GO?

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Maryland Longitudinal Study Steering Committee
Division of Student Affairs
The University of Maryland College Park
Summer 1987

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STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM UMCP: WHO ARE THEY? WHY DO THEY LEAVE? WHERE DO THEY GO?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The focus of this report is students who have transferred from UMCP and were studied as a part of the Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS). Transfer students are not very often investigated because few institutions have the resources to locate and establish contact with these students once they have transferred. However, transfer students can help an institution learn more about itself because unlike college dropouts, transfers have at least one other college experience with which to compare their original college of matriculation. **Five major questions about UMCP transfers were addressed in the present report:**

I. Who are the transfer students?

The answer to this question centered on a variety of precollege and college characteristics. Transfers in the Representative Group were as likely to be male or female. However, in the Black Group, transfers were twice as likely to be female. Parental experiences with college varied, although the fathers of transfers in the Representative Group were more likely to have dropped out of college without obtaining the baccalaureate than the fathers of persisters. As freshmen, prior to their departure from UMCP, transfers reported working more hours per week — often off-campus — than did persisters. There were no differences between transfers and persisters in size of high school attended, although enrolling in the "academic" track of the high school curriculum was associated with later persistence in college for the Representative Group. Academically, transfers appeared to come from high school less well prepared: they reported poorer study habits and significantly lower SAT verbal scores than students who would persist. Finally, as freshmen, transfers in the Representative Group were more likely to live with parents than students who would persist: persisters were more likely to live on campus.

II. How were students doing academically and socially at the time of transfer?

Transfers in both the Representative and Black Groups in years 2 and 3 earned significantly lower grade point averages than students who would persist. Transfers in year 2 earned less than a 2.00 — the minimum required to graduate from UMCP.

Looking back to the freshman year, students in both groups who would become transfers, reported greater dissatisfaction than students who would continue to persist at UMCP with their social lives; although the difference between Black Group transfers and Black Group persisters was less great.

III. When did transfer students leave UMCP?

Representative Group transfers in year 2 began thinking about transferring relatively early on: 22% in the fall semester and 24% in the spring semester of their first year. Black transfers were more likely to report waiting until the spring semester to begin thinking about transferring (39%).

IV. Why did transfer students choose to leave UMCP?

Transfers in the Representative Group (year 2) indicated the inability to meet academic requirements as their primary reason for leaving UMCP, followed by dissatisfaction with the social environment and inadequate financial resources. The Black Group also gave these reasons, although financial concerns were rated second, followed by dissatisfaction with social life. Transfers in year 3 also reported these concerns.

V. Where did transfer students go after leaving UMCP?

Year 2 transfers reported attending area community colleges in significant numbers (over 60% reported attending community colleges such as Prince Georges Community College and Montgomery College). Representative Group transfers in year 3 were more likely to transfer to other four year institutions whereas Black Group transfers were almost equally divided between those who transferred to two and four year colleges.

The authorship of this report is corporate and rests with the Maryland Longitudinal Study Steering Committee whose members created and carried out the study over a ten year period and are repsonsible for the study's reports.

Appendix A recognizes the numerous individuals who contributed to the success of the Maryland Longitudinal Study sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs at The University of Maryland College Park.

The Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) is a research undertaking of the Division of Student Affairs at The University of Maryland College Park. A significant number of Student Affairs staff have been involved in the study since its inception. A Steering Committee appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs has been responsible for the methodology, data collection, and management of this project. These individuals are listed in Appendix A of this report.

STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM UMCP: WHO ARE THEY? WHY DO THEY LEAVE? WHERE DO THEY GO?

Students who transfer often fall in between the cracks: unlike the group of their cohorts who drop out of college, transfers are not usually subject to the same scrutiny and concern. One reason for this is detailed information about transfer students is often lacking. Because transfer students leave the academic institution, the connection between them and the college is usually severed. Thus the opportunity to understand both why the student elected to leave the original college of matriculation and how well the student fared at their new school is lost.

The Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) has collected data on students who have transferred from The University of Maryland College Park (UMCP). Students who transfer from UMCP are of interest for several reasons. First, these transfer students can help the institution learn more about itself because unlike college dropouts, transfers have at least one other college experience with which to compare UMCP. Second, if transfer students elected to leave UMCP because of negative experiences here, increased information about these experiences may encourage changes or corrections which would improve the likelihood of retaining those individuals at College Park. Third, following those who have transferred is the only means by which an institution can learn of the ultimate graduation rates of its matriculants.

This report will focus on five major questions:

1. **Who are the transfer students?** Descriptive information such as pre-college characteristics (sex, race, high school experience, educational background of parents) and college characteristics (resident status: commuter or campus resident, number of hours worked and grade point average) will be reported thus yielding a profile of UMCP students who transfer to other colleges or universities.

2. **How were students doing academically and socially at the time of transfer?** To answer this question, students' official grade point average and self reported satisfaction with college life will be presented.

3. **When did transfer students leave UMCP?** Data will be presented on when the majority of students began during their tenure at UMCP to think about their decision to transfer and when these students actually transferred from UMCP.

4. **Why did transfer students choose to leave UMCP?** The various reasons students reported for transferring from UMCP to another college will be analyzed as well as any indication of what the University might have done to have kept them enrolled.

5. **Where did transfer students go after leaving UMCP?** The names and types of institutions to which students transferred will be reported in answering this question.

This report will be divided into seven sections. The first section will briefly describe the nature of the MLS subject population and the testing procedures used to collect the information used in this report. Sections two through six will follow the five major questions identified above. These questions focus this report upon the opinions held by transfer students about their UMCP experience prior to their departure. Emphasis will be given to student characteristics (especially in the freshman year) that distinguish those who transfer from those who persist at UMCP. The last section of the report will summarize the results and describe implications of our findings for UMCP.

I: DESCRIPTION OF STUDENTS AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Since a complete description of the Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) can be found in *MLS Report 1: A Descriptive Overview,*[1] the two descriptive aspects of the study included here are: important characteristics of the students studied as a part of this particular report and a description of the data collected from them.

This report will contrast the responses of students enrolled at UMCP (termed "persisters") to the responses of students who transferred to another institution of higher education (termed "transfers"). Because MLS is a longitudinal research study, it is possible to study students as they make the decision to transfer from UMCP at various points in time. Thus in this study we have four groups of first time or initial transfers: those who leave UMCP by the time of data collection in years 1, 2, 3 and 4 of MLS. Data were also collected in the fifth year of MLS, (mostly on college graduates); however since the number of first time transfers was very small (n=15), the data collected from these students are not reviewed here. In this report attention will be primarily focused on the second and third years of the study because of the small number of first time transfers in the first, fourth and fifth years of MLS.

In addition to a comparison of student persisters and transfers, this report will contrast students by membership in either the Representative Group[2] or Black Group. The Representative Group is a random sample of freshmen selected from the entering class of fall, 1980. Thus, this sample is a cross section of the larger freshman class and as such contains a representative group of minorities — including approximately 10% black students. It is important to keep in mind that this "Representative Group" is thus not a "white" sample, but instead reflects the ethnic diversity at UMCP.

Because of the Division of Student Affairs' strong interest in the collegiate experience of black students on campus and the relatively small number of blacks in the freshman class of 1980-81, all black students not included in the Representative Group were also invited to participate in MLS. These blacks who agreed to participate became members of the "Black Group."

For purposes of analysis, the Black Group (consisting of all the black freshmen not already selected as part of the Representative Group as well as the blacks in the Representative Group), constitute the black individuals studied in this report. Using data from the blacks in the Representative Group and adding them into the Black Group was done for two reasons. First, as large a group as possible was desirable because of the relatively small numbers of blacks in the freshman class of the fall, 1980 and attrition over the years of the longitudinal study further reduces the number of study participants. Second, the intention in the selection of the Black Group was the testing of the total available (and willing) population, rather than of a specified "sample" as was the case with the Representative Group. **Consequently, the blacks in the Representative Group do "double duty" in these analyses by being members of the Black Group and members of the Representative Group.**

The data used in this report were collected as part of yearly face-to-face interviews with MLS participants

and yearly written surveys completed by the same individuals.

II: WHO ARE THOSE WHO BECOME TRANSFERS?

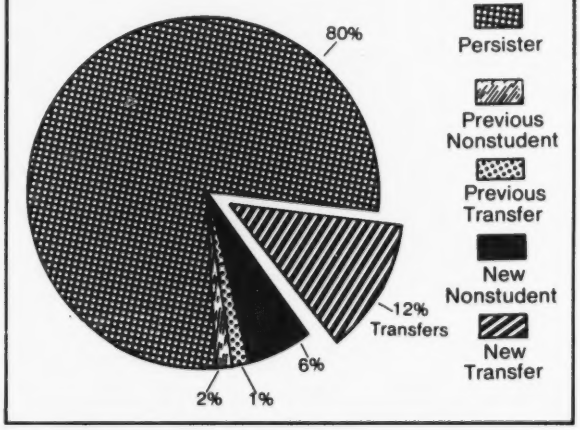
In this section, the number of MLS participants who transfer in each year of the study will be broken down by sex and membership in either the Representative or Black Group. Within the Representative Group, the numbers of each minority group will be outlined. Finally, the percentages of students living on and off campus, amount of time spent working at a job, and high school characteristics and parents' educational background will be examined.

Percentage of First Time Transfers

In order to make the figures more meaningful, transfers in each year can be compared to the number of MLS participants in the Black and Representative Groups persisting at UMCP (termed "persisters"). As might be expected, by the spring semester of the first year of MLS testing,the vast majority of students were persisters (over 700): only eight students (all from the Representative Group) indicated their status as a first time transfer.

By spring semester of the second year of MLS testing, the breakdown of participants was as follows: 56 students (20%) from the Black Group and 49 students (12%) from the Representative Group indicated they were first time, new transfers from UMCP. Sixty-five percent (n=178) of black MLS second year particpants indicated their status as persisters at UMCP and 80% (n=325) of students in the Representative Group indicated the same. In addition to the "persisters" and "transfers," described above, the academic status of the remaining contacted MLS participants in the second year of the study was "nonstudent," (individuals who had left higher education) and "transfer II" (i.e. transfer students in their second year of enrollment at a transfer institution.)

FIGURE 1. 1982 Enrollment Status
Representative Group



By the spring semester of the third year of MLS testing, the percentages of first time transfers from UMCP and persisters in the Representative and Black Groups were as follows: 26 or 11% of the Black Group reported that they were first time or initial transfers; 31 or 8% of the Representative Group reported the same. In the Black Group, 57% (n=131) were persisters compared to 71% (n= 268) of the Representative Group.

FIGURE 2. 1982 Enrollment Status
Black Group

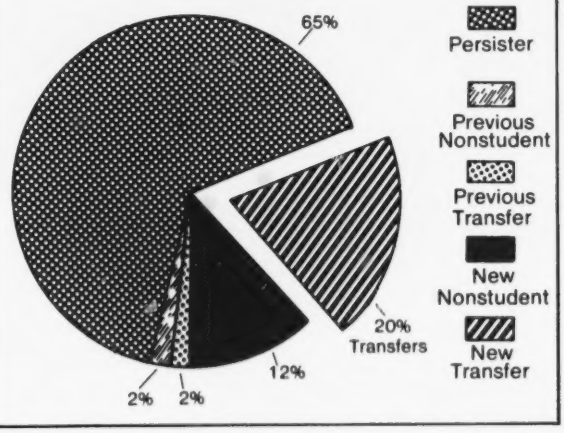


FIGURE 3. 1983 Enrollment Status
Representative Group

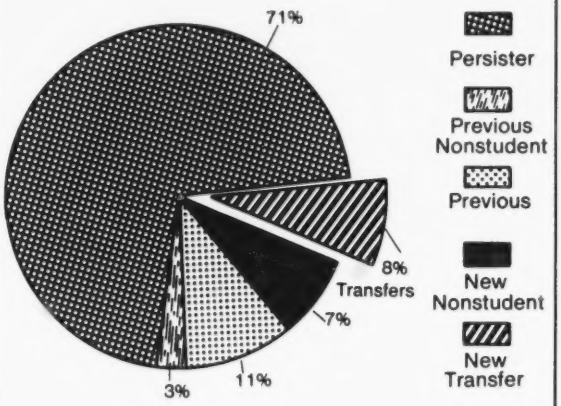
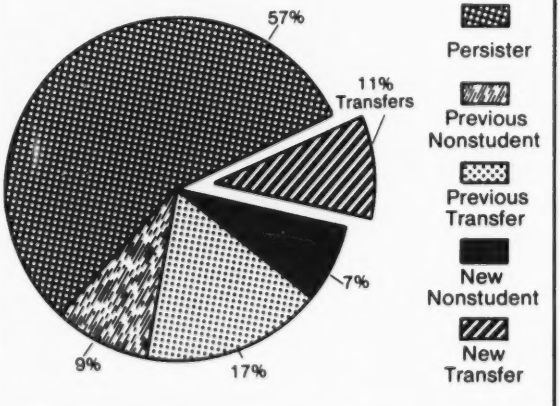


FIGURE 4. 1983 Enrollment Status
Black Group



By the spring semester of year 4 of MLS testing, a small percentage reported their status as a first time transfer from UMCP: 13 or 6% of the Black Group and 19 or 5% of the Representative Group. Almost 49% of the Black Group were persisters (n=101) and 68% of the Representative Group reported that academic status (n=250).

Given the above description of the MLS transfer population, this report could focus on up to eight separate subgroups: first time transfers (Transfer I's) in years 1, 2, 3, and 4 of MLS from both the Representative and Black Groups. While each of these groups could probably reveal different insights into the transfer phenomenon, only first time transfers in the second and third years of the study from the Black and Representative Groups will be considered in this report. These groups were selected because their relatively large size met the requirements of data analysis and because students who choose to transfer after completion of their third year or fourth year of college are probably quite different than students who transfer earlier in their college careers.

Thus this report will compare and contrast students who transfer from UMCP in the second year of MLS (henceforth referred to as theYear 2 Transfers: Black and Representative Groups) and in the third year of MLS (henceforth referred to as the Year 3 Transfers: Black and Representative Groups). In addition, where appropriate, transfers will be compared to students who persisted at UMCP ("persisters" in the Black and Representative Groups).

Racial Breakdown of First Time Transfers

While the Black Group is by design composed only of blacks, the Representative Group consists of a number of minorities in addition to whites. See Table 1 for a breakdown by race of the Representative Group by persister and transfer status in the second and third years of MLS.

TABLE 1

Race Breakdown: Year 2 Representative Group

	White	Black	Asian	Other
TRANSFERS (n=49)	78% (38)	12% (6)	4% (2)	6% (3)
PERSISTERS (n=325)	87% (282)	8% (25)	2% (6)	3% (12)

Race Breakdown: Year 3 Representative Group

	White	Black	Asian	Other
TRANSFERS (n=31)	81% (25)	19% (6)	0	0
PERSISTERS (n=268)	87% (234)	6% (16)	2% (6)	5% (12)

Sex Breakdown of First time Transfers

Comparing the first time transfers in the Representative and Black Groups by sex produced some interesting contrasts. Considering second and third year transfers in the Representative Group first, the number of males and females transferring to other insitutions of higher education is approximately equal. In the second year of the study, 51% (n=25) of first time transfers were males; 49% (n=24) were females. In the third year of the study, the percentages had changed slightly: 45% (n=14) of transfers were males; 55% (n=17) were females.

The roughly equal transfer rate by sex explicated above in the Representative Group is not seen in the Black Group. Instead, **a much higher percentage of black women than black men appear to transfer from UMCP.** In the Black Group, year 2 and 3, almost twice as many black women as black men transferred from the University. Almost 64% (n=36) of first time black transfers in year 2 were women and (36% or n=20) were men; in year 3, 69% (n=18) of the black transfers were women and 31% (n =8) were men.

Pre-College Characteristics of Transfers

This part of the report will focus on descriptive background charateristics of individuals who become transfer students from UMCP. Specifically, it will examine differences between transfers and persisters in terms of the educational background of these students' parents; the type of high school attended, their high school study habits and SAT scores.

PARENTS' EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Father's Education: Year 2 Transfers

The fathers of persisters in the Representative Group averaged slightly more education than fathers of Representative Group transfer students in the second year of MLS. Thirty seven percent of UMCP persisters reported their fathers had completed college degrees; 26% of first time transfers' fathers also earned the baccalaureate. Persisters' fathers also earned slightly more post baccalaureate degrees than the fathers of transfers (27% versus 26%). Thirteen percent of persisters' fathers were reported to have dropped out of college or to have had "some college" compared to 15% of transfers' fathers.

In general, fathers of Black Group year 2 transfers completed less education than the fathers of Black Group persisters. For example, 19% fathers of Black Group persisters were reported as having earned the baccalaureate degree compared to 8% of Black Group transfers' fathers. Fifteen percent of the fathers of Black Group persisters completed post baccalaureate degrees; 9% of Black Group transfers' fathers were reported to have the same educational background. Twenty three percent of the Black Group persisters' fathers had dropped out of college before earning the baccalaureate compared to 25% of the Black Group transfers' fathers. Table 2 below outlines the percentages of educational level earned by fathers of persisters and transfers in the second year of MLS.

TABLE 2

Father's Education Year 2 Transfers (Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Grammar School	3	2	9	9
Some High School	6	15	11	8
High School Graduate	14	17	24	42
Some College	13	15	23	25
College Graduate	37	26	19	8
Post B.A. Education	27	26	25	9

Father's Education: Year 3 Transfers

For Representative Group transfers in year 3, the figures are as follows: 38% of the fathers of UMCP persisters in year 3 completed college and another 31%

had post baccalaureate degrees. Forty two percent of transfers' fathers completed the baccalaureate and 19% had post baccalaureate level education. Twelve percent of UMCP persisters' fathers were reported to have dropped out or attended "some college" compared to 10% of the fathers of Representative Group transfers.

The fathers of Black Group transfers in year 3 were reported to have completed more higher education than Black Group UMCP persisters in the same year. Combining the percentages of those earning bachelors and post baccalaureate degrees reveals that 35% of Black Group persisters' fathers earned these degrees compared to 41% of Black Group transfers' fathers. Table 3 below reports the percentage of fathers earning each level of education for persisters and transfers in the third year of MLS.

TABLE 3

Father's Education
Year 3 Transfers
(Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Grammar School	2	3	8	8
Some High School	5	13	11	4
High School Graduate	13	13	23	29
Some College	12	10	23	17
College Graduate	38	42	18	33
Post B.A. Education	31	19	17	8

Mother's Education: Year 2 Transfers

In year 2, a high proportion of the mothers of UMCP transfers in the Representative Group appear to have ended their formal education at high school. About 35% of mothers of UMCP persisters completed high school; 32% of mothers of transfers had the same educational background. The mothers of persisters completed college at a higher rate (27%) than did mothers of transfers (21%). Twenty four percent of persisters' mothers dropped out or attended "some college," compared to 30% of transfers' mothers.

Black Group transfers and Black Group UMCP persisters in year 2,also had a high proportion of mothers who completed high school (both groups reported 36% of their mothers attained this level of education). Over 21% the mothers of Black Group UMCP persisters completed college whereas 14% of Black Group transfer mothers earned a college degree. Although the numbers are small, equal percentages of mothers earned post baccalaureate degrees: 11% of Black Group persisters (n= 19) and 11% of Black Group transfers' mothers (n=6). Table 4 below reports the percentage of mothers earning each level of education for the persisters and transfers in the second year of MLS.

Mother's Education: Year 3 Transfers

Considering now the year 3 transfers in the Representative Group, mothers were more likely to have completed high school than college (34% of persisters' mothers and 39% of transfers' mothers completed high school). Like the previous year, more mothers of persisters actually completed the baccalaureate than mothers of first time transfers (28% of persisters' mothers versus 16% of transfers' mothers). A substantial percentage reported that their mothers dropped out of college before earning the degree: 24% of the mothers of persisters and 29% of year 3 Representative transfers' mothers.

TABLE 4

Mother's Education
Year 2 Transfers
(Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Grammar School	2	4	3	4
Some High School	5	4	4	7
High School Graduate	35	32	36	36
Some College	24	30	25	29
College Graduate	27	21	21	14
Post B.A. Education	8	9	11	11

For Black Group transfers in year 3, the pattern changes somewhat. A slightly greater percentage of mothers of Black Group transfers than mothers of Black Group UMCP persisters attended college and earned the baccalaureate (24% versus 23%). However, more mothers of Black Group persisters had post baccalaureate educations: 14% compared to 8% of Black Group transfers' mothers. So when considered together, the mothers of Black Group persisters had more overall education than the mothers of Black Group transfers. Indeed, more transfer mothers were reported to have had "some college" (32%) or dropping out in a greater proportion than did mothers of persisters in the Black Group (26%). Table 5 below reports the level of education for the mothers of Black Group persisters and transfers in the third year of MLS.

TABLE 5

Mother's Education
Year 3 Transfers
(Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Grammar School	1	7	2	8
Some High School	5	3	2	0
High School Graduate	34	39	33	28
Some College	24	29	26	32
College Graduate	28	16	23	24
Post B.A. Education	9	7	14	8

High School Characteristics

In order to gain a better understanding of individuals who become transfers versus those who do not, several high school background characteristics were explored. Again, year 2 transfers and year 3 transfers will be compared to students who were still enrolled at UMCP during those years.

High School Size: Year 2 Transfers

High school size is of interest because some have speculated that the large size of UMCP may be negatively perceived by students. Students who have had experience with large environments in high school may more easily adjust to the UMCP campus and hence be less likely to transfer.

MLS participants were asked to identify the size of their high school using the following six categories: **1** = Less than 49, **2** = 50-99, **3** = 100-299, **4** = 300-499, **5** = 500-699 and **6** = Over 700. The results are presented in Table 6. As can be seen, Representative Group transfers in year 2 were slightly more likely to have attended a smaller high school than persisters. About 35% of Representative Group persisters report attending high schools of 500 students or larger compared to 22% of Representative Group transfers (combining the two categories "500-699" and "over 700"). In contrast, Black Group transfers in year 2 appear to have attended large high schools at roughly the same percentage as Black Group persisters (34% of Black Group persisters versus 36% of Black Group transfers.) Thus, lack of experience with large school settings may be a more important factor for transfers in the Representative Group. The table below specifies the percent breakdown by size of high school and status (UMCP persister or first time transfer in the Representative and Black Groups).

TABLE 6
Year 2 Transfers
High School Size
(Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Less than 49	2	8	2	0
50- 99	3	6	9	7
100-299	23	29	25	29
300-499	36	35	31	29
500-699	21	12	26	34
Over 700	14	10	8	2

TABLE 7
Year 3 Transfers
High School Size
(Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Less than 49	2	0	2	0
50- 99	3	7	7	4
100-299	23	36	25	28
300-499	38	23	32	3
500-699	20	26	27	20
Over 700	14	10	7	16

High School Size: Year 3 Transfers

Considering year 3 transfers now, Table 7 below outlines the responses of third year transfers and persisters concerning their high school size. Examining the percentages in each of the categories for high school size reveals no clear differences between Black and Representative Group transfers. Practically equal percentages of both groups of transfers reported attending large sized high schools: about 36% each. Comparing each transfer group to third year persisters (Black and Representative) also does not reveal any significant differences in size of high school attended: approximately 34% of Representative Group persisters indicated attending high school with more than 500 students; approximately 34% of Black Group persisters reported the same. Therefore, no obvious differences appear to exist between third year UMCP persisters and year 3 transfers in relation to size of high school attended.

HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Students were also asked about their high school background in terms of type of curriculum or program studied. Response options included three types of public high school curriculums: Academic or college track; Commercial; or General. The other response options were: Parochial, Private and Other. Because the vast majority of our students report attending public high schools, attention will be focused on the association between type of public school curriculum and later transfer behaviors. Furthermore, since a general assumption exists that the academic or college track curriculum provides a better background for college study than other alternatives, emphasis on this type of high school program seems doubly worthwhile.

High School Curriculum: Year 2 Transfers

Table 8 provides the percentages of each type of curricular program undertaken in high school by transfers in year 2 compared to students who persisted at UMCP. Transfers in the Black Group resemble persisters in the Representative Group in having studied in a college prep or academic track in high school (64% of both groups report this high school curriculum). Transfers from the Representative Group report the lowest percentage of public school, academic track high school background (48%). Thus this result lends support to the notion that the college prep high school program is associated with increased persistence in the original college of matriculation. The fact that Black Group transfers report high school academic curricular backgrounds at the same rate as UMCP persisters suggests that lack of academic preparation may not be black students' primary reason for transferring. A later section of this report will review black transfers' reasons for leaving UMCP.

TABLE 8
Year 2 Transfers
High School Program
(Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Public Academic	64	48	54	64
Public Commercial	2	0	4	2
Public General	22	21	22	11
Parochial	6	23	10	14
Private	5	6	6	9
Other	1	2	3	0

High School Curriculum: Year 3 Transfers

The pattern of high school curriculum is similar for transfers in year 3. Transfers from the Representative Group again report the lowest percentage of participation in a college prep high school program (48%). Transfers from the Black Group report a slightly higher percentage: 56%. These figures compare to 64% for year 3 Representative Group persisters and 55% for Black Group persisters. This pattern again minimizes the connection between a high school academic curriculum and persistence at UMCP for black transfers, although the differences between the third year Black and Representative Groups are not as pronounced as was described above in the second year of MLS. Table 9 reports the percentages of persisters and transfers in the third year of MLS who were enrolled in the different high school programs.

TABLE 9

Year 3 Transfers
High School Programs
(Percentage)

	Representative Group		Black Group	
	Persisters	Transfers	Persisters	Transfers
Public Academic	64	48	55	56
Public Commercial	2	7	5	4
Public General	21	29	21	24
Parochial	7	7	12	8
Private	5	10	5	4
Other	1	0	3	4

HIGH SCHOOL STUDY HABITS

What kind of study habits had students developed during their high school years that would provide a strong foundation for college work? The responses to 11 questions about high school study habits were analyzed. Given space limitations, only study habits where large percentage differences occurred between transfers and UMCP persisters will be examined here.

High School Study Habits: Year 2 Transfers

Three high school study habits appeared to differentiate between transfers in year 2: (Representative and Black Groups) and UMCP persisters. These habits were:

a. Turned assignments in on time
b. Made careless mistakes on tests
c. Had trouble concentrating on assignments

Forty-five percent of Representative Group transfers indicated they "Always" turned in assignments on time. This percentage is comparable to 53% of students who would be persisters at UMCP in the second year of MLS. Thirty-five percent of Representative Group transfers indicated they made careless mistakes on tests "Usually" or "Always" compared to 17% of UMCP persisters. Finally, Representative Group transfers indicated "Usually" or "Always" having trouble concentrating on assignments at a greater percentage (27%) than students who would remained enrolled (10%).

The same three high school study habits differentiated between Black Group transfers and Black Group persisters in year 2. Forty-six percent of Black Group transfers "Always" turned assignments in on time compared to 57% of Black Group persisters. Twenty-nine percent of Black Group transfers "Usually" or "Always" made careless mistakes on tests compared to 17% of Black Group persisters. And 13% of Black Group transfers "Usually" or "Always" had trouble concentrating on assignments compared to 7% of Black Group persisters.

High School Study Habits: Year 3 Transfers

The high school study habits of transfers in year 3 were also analyzed. There were fewer large differences between UMCP persisters in the third year of the study and transfers. However the item dealing with making careless mistakes on tests was quite discrepant. Here 36% of Black Group third year transfers indicated "Usually" or "Always" making such mistakes compared to 15% of Black Group persisters. Thirty percent of Representative Group transfers reported having been likely to make mistakes, compared to 17% of students who persisted.

A second study habit item "Did homework at the same time each day" also was responded to differently by transfers and persisters: 36% of Black Group transfers indicated "Usually" or "Always" doing homework at the same time compared to 47% of those Black Group students who would persist at UMCP. In addition, 32% of Representative Group transfers reported "doing homework at the same time" compared to 46% of students who persisted.

Representative Group transfers in the third year of MLS were also different from UMCP persisters on the high school study habit: "Carefully went over diagrams of tables in textbooks." For the first time, more transfers than persisters reported a good high school study habit: they were more likely than students who would be persisters at UMCP in the third year of MLS to say they carefully reviewed diagrams and tables: 51% of transfers compared to 38% of UMCP persisters.

HIGH SCHOOL S.A.T. SCORES

While the value of the SAT in predicting success in college has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years, not much information is available on the relationship between the SAT and transferring behavior. Thus the high school SAT scores of transfers were compared to the scores of UMCP persisters in the second and third years of MLS. Unlike most of the MLS data which were collected directly from study participants, the SAT data were gathered from official University records.

SAT Scores: Year 2 Transfers

Representative and Black Group transfers in year 2 reported the following SAT math and verbal scores presented in the table below:

TABLE 10

Year 2 Transfers

Representative Group	**SATM**	**SATV**
Transfer	484	412*
UMCP Persister	517	464*
Black Group		
Transfer	383*	350*
UMCP Persister	417*	397*

*p < .05

The difference between the SAT scores of transfers and persisters is statistically significant [3] (with the exception of the SAT math score for the Representative Group). The difference between the SAT math scores of

Representative Group transfers and persisters, however, just misses statistical significance ($p < .06$). Thus it appears that lower SAT scores are associated with later transfer behavior for transfers in year 2.

SAT Scores: Year 3 Transfers

Doing the same breakdowns in the third year of the study produces similar results: transfers had significantly lower SAT verbal scores than students who would remain enrolled at UMCP in the third year of MLS. However, the differences between persisters and Black and Representative Group transfers do not quite reach statistical significance for the SAT math scores. See Table 11 below for the SAT scores of these groups:

TABLE 11

Year 3 Transfers

Representative Group	SATM	SATV
Transfers	485	435*
UMCP Persisters	524	471*
Black Group		
Transfers	386	359*
UMCP Persisters	425	404*

* $p < .05$

These data suggest that transfer students in both year 2 and year 3 may be less prepared to perform academically than students who persist at UMCP — especially in verbal ability and related skills. A later section of this report will review transfers' and persisters' grade point averages for selected semesters to see if this prediction is fulfilled by actual lack of academic performance.

Having considered whether transfers and persisters begin at UMCP with an "equal starting line," or similar backgrounds in terms of high school preparation, study habits, parental experience with higher education etc., the following section will address characteristics of year 2 and year 3 transfers while they were enrolled at UMCP. For example, students' place of residence (e.g. on or off campus), satisfaction with campus social life, and sources of satisfaction and disappointment will be addressed.

Transfers' UMCP Experience

PLACE OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST TIME TRANSFERS

Each year MLS participants were asked: "Where do you currently live?" Six response possibilities were provided: **1.** With my parents, **2.** In college residence hall (dorm), **3.** Fraternity/Sorority house, **4.** Live alone in an apartment/co-op house, **5.** Share an apartment/co-op house, **6.** Other. Perhaps the most meaningful way of looking at the transfer students' place of residence is to look at where they lived the year prior to their transfer from UMCP. This approach has three advantages. First, it may provide some insight into understanding the relationship between place of residence and later transfer behavior. Second, such an approach takes fullest advantage of the longitudinal nature of the MLS. Because the same individuals were tested over time, connections between early behaviors and environments (i.e. high school study habits or freshman place of residence) can be established with later outcomes (i.e. transferring from UMCP). Consequently it is possible to "look backwards," in this case from either the perspective of year 2 transfers or year 3 transfers, to earlier points in time (i.e. earlier points of testing in the students' first or second year at UMCP). Third, the institution where transfers are enrolled subsequent to UMCP may or may not have certain housing options available (i.e. campus residence halls), thus obscuring meaningful comparisons. This is particularly true for those students who have transferred to community colleges which seldom have much, if any, on campus housing.

Freshman Residence: Year 2 Transfers

Taking this approach to the "place of residence" data can be done as follows: use students' enrollment status in the second year of MLS (either transfer or persister) and "look back" to where they lived upon first entering UMCP. Considering year 2 transfers first: 53% of students who would become first time transfers from UMCP in the Representative Group reported living at home in their freshman year; 35% report living in a UMCP residence hall as freshmen. The remaining percentage indicated living in various types of off-campus housing. Turning now to year 2 transfers in the Black Group, 47% percent lived with their parents as freshmen. A higher percentage of this group lived in residence halls as freshmen: almost 51% reported living on campus. Again, the few remaining Black Group transfers lived in "other" types of housing as freshmen.

Freshman Residence: Year 3 Transfers

The place of residence of year 3 transfers in their freshman year at UMCP was also analyzed in the manner described above. Fifty-three percent of Representative Group students who would transfer from UMCP in the third year reported living with their parents as freshmen. Forty-three percent reported they had lived in campus housing as freshmen. Black transfers in year 3 were less likely to have lived with their parents as freshmen than their fellow Representative Group colleagues (44%). More of these students also indicated living on campus as freshmen (52%). Again the small percent remaining reported other off campus housing options.

Comparing Transfers To Persisters: Campus Residence

Using this "looking backwards" approach to the data, it is also interesting to compare the transfers in year 2 and 3 to students who persisted at UMCP during those same years. Limiting the comparison to those who lived on campus versus those who lived with parents (the two most common places of residence of the majority of our students) suggests that Representative Group students who would persist into their second year at UMCP were slightly more likely to live on campus as freshmen than were students who would transfer from UMCP. More specifically, 40% of Representative Group persisters lived on campus as freshmen compared to 35% of Representative Group transfers. In contrast, practically equal percentages of Black Group persisters (50%) and Black Group transfers (51%) in the second year of MLS indicated having lived in campus residence halls as freshmen.

Black Group transfers in year 3 were as likely to have lived on campus as freshmen as were Black Group persisters (52% versus 54%). The reverse was true for third year transfers in the Representative Group (43% of transfers lived on campus as freshmen compared to 40% of persisters).

However, perhaps a more valid analysis for year 3 transfers, looks back to the year prior to their transfer (the second year of MLS), rather than back to their freshman year. From this perspective, many more students from the Representative Group who were persisters in the third year of MLS reported having been campus residents the previous year (the second year of MLS) than students who were third year transfers from UMCP. Fifty-one percent of year 3 Representative Group persisters reporting living on campus their pre-

vious academic year compared to 41% of third year transfers. Students who transferred were slightly more likely to have lived with their parents (38%) the previous year compared to those who persist at UMCP (32%) in the third year of the study.

In year 3, the comparison is more dramatic in the Black Group: over 65% of Black Group persisters in the third year of MLS were campus residents their previous academic year compared to 46% of Black Group transfers. Black Group transfers were almost twice as likely to live with parents than Black Group persisters (50% versus 26%).

These longitudinal analyses provide some support for the positive connection between living on campus and continued persistence at UMCP: the influence of living on campus as freshmen appears to have been a more potent factor for persisters in the Representative Group whereas living on campus as sophomores (the second year of MLS testing) is associated with greater persistence for the Black Group.

EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS DURING COLLEGE

MLS participants were questioned about their employment status during the first, second and third years of the study (Item = "Work status during the freshman or current academic year:"). Students were asked to identify the nature of their employment using the following categories: **1** = Federally sponsored work-study **2** = Otheron campus work **3** = Off campus work **4** = Employment for college credit as part of departmental program **5** = I do not work. The analyses which follow will "look back" from the students' enrollment status in year 2 or 3, to the previous year to determine if differences exist between students who eventually transfer and those who persist.

Employment Patterns: Year 2 Transfers

Because of problems in the way the question was asked of MLS participants in the first year of the study, it is difficult to accurately determine what percentage of these students did not work at all. Instead, the percentage of students who indicated that they worked on or off campus during their freshman year will be reported. A higher percentage of students who had transferred by the second year of MLS testing reported that they worked on campus (Representative Group): 14% compared to 10% of future persisters. Black Group transfers were even more likely to indicate that they had worked on campus as freshmen: 27% for Black Group transfers and 22% for Black Group persisters.

In terms of working off campus during the freshman year, 48% of students in the Representative Group who would become transfers indicated having worked off campus compared to 38% of persisters. The difference between Black Group persisters and black transfers was less: 25% of Black Group persisters reported working off campus as freshmen compared to 29% of Black Group future transfers.

Employment Patterns: Year 3 Transfers

The data from the second year of the study, the year prior to their transfer from UMCP, allow a clearer picture of the employment pattern of transfers in year 3. Considering the Representative Group first, almost equal percentages of students who would remain enrolled and those who would become transfers reported that they did not work at all (38% of transfers and 36% of persisters). Of those who were employed, persisters were much more likely to report that they had worked on campus the previous year than students who would transfer out (23% compared to 10% of transfers). Forty eight percent of transfers indicated they had worked off campus as sophomores compared to 38% of students who would persist.

For black transfers in year 3, again over one third of both future transfers and persisters indicated they had not worked at all during their previous year at UMCP (39% of Black Group persisters and 38% of Black Group transfers). There were no large differences between the two groups in the percentages who had worked off campus (21% of Black Group persisters and 25% of Black Group transfers). However, Black Group persisters were twice as likely to have worked on campus in the second year of the study compared to Black Group students who would transfer (25% of Black Group persisters compared to 13% of Black Group transfers).

Thus persisters in the Representative Group were less likely to work than transfers and when they did work, they more often worked on campus. The differences between persisters and transfers in the Black Group were smaller: however, black students who would persist were again more likely to work on campus than students who would transfer from UMCP.

Students were also asked about the number of hours they spent working during their freshman year: "Number of hours worked per week," Options included **a)** fewer than five **b)** 5-9 hours **c)** 10-14 hours **d)** 15-19 hours **e)** 20-24 hours **f)** 25 hours or more.

Hours Worked: Year 2 Transfers

Considering the year 2 transfers (Representative Group) first, 50% of students who would persist to the sophomore year reported working less than five hours per week as freshmen. This compares to 36% of students who would transfer from UMCP in year 2. Furthermore, transfers report working much longer hours than persisters: 43% of future transfers worked 15 or more hours per week as freshmen compared to 24% of those who would continue to persist. Fourteen percent of future transfers report working more than 25 hour per week as freshmen compared to 4% of those who persisted to the second year of MLS.

In the Black Group, students who would become transfers worked more hours as freshmen than Black Group students who would persist to the second year of the study. Almost 43% of black persisters said they worked fewer than five hours per week compared to 37% of transfers in the Black Group. Almost equal percentages of both groups were working more than five hours but less than 14 hours per week (28% of Black Group persisters and 31% of Black Group transfers). Blacks who would transfer and black persisters reported working 15 hours per week or more in similar percentages (29% of future persisters and 33% of future transfers).

Hours Worked: Year 3 Transfers

"Looking backwards" from the third year of the study to freshman work behavior does not show as consistent a relationship between number of hours spent working and continued persistence in college as was seen for transfers in year 2. Students who were persisters in the third year of MLS worked more hours as freshmen than year 3 transfers — almost 27% of persisters in the Representative Sample worked more than 15 hours per week compared to 15% of students who had transferred by the third year of the study. More transfers also said they had worked less than five hours per week as freshmen (55% compared to 48% of future persisters).

In terms of the black transfers, 28% of third year Black Group persisters reported having worked 15 or more hours per week as freshmen. This figure contrasts to nineteen percent of year 3 Black Group transfers who reported working that many hours.

Since these students (transfers and persisters) had completed two years at UMCP, perhaps the above results are not surprising. If the number of hours worked had been a significant negative factor in these students' freshman year, it is likely that they would not have waited until after their second year at UMCP to transfer.

III: HOW WERE STUDENTS DOING ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY AT THE TIME OF TRANSFER?

In this section, a comparison of first time transfers and those students who continued to attend UMCP will be done focusing on academic achievements and social satisfaction. Like the previous section, a separate reporting will be done for the transfers in the second and third years of the study.

Academic Accomplishment

A primary index of academic accomplishment is the student's grade point average. While the role of academic failure is clearly associated with dropping out of college, its role in the transfer phenomenon is not as well understood. Below, the cumulative grade point averages of transfers in year 2 and 3 will be compared to UMCP persisters. The freshman data of year 2 transfers will be compared to persisters to see if even early on, before they actually transferred from UMCP, they had achieved less academically. For transfers in year 3, the grade point averages from their two previous years at UMCP will be compared to persisters.

FRESHMAN GRADES: YEAR 2 TRANSFERS

In the first semester of the freshman year, students who would become transfers by the following year's MLS testing (spring, 1982) had significantly lower grade point averages than students who would remain enrolled at College Park. The semester mean grade point average for persisters in the Representative Group was 2.6; this compares to 1.7 for students who would become transfers. For the Black Group, black persisters earned a first semester grade point average of 2.1 whereas black transfers had first semester grades of 1.4. Thus, students who would become transfers (in either the Black or Representative groups) were not earning the minimum grade point average required by the University to graduate (2.00).

Is this apparently early academic difficulty a transition from high school phenomenon which improves during the students' second semester of enrollment? An analysis of the second semester freshman grades for persisters and transfers in year 2 reveals the same pattern as the first semester: students who will continue to persist are earning higher grades: Representative Group persisters have a second semester grade point average of 2.6 and Black Group persisters have earned a 2.2. The transfers look like the following: transfers in the Representative Group have a 1.7 grade point average; transfers in the Black Group have a grade point of 1.3. These are statistically significant differences. Thus again, both groups of transfers are earning less than the minimum graduation requirement. Table 12 (see bottom of first column) reports these grade point averages in tabular form.

TABLE 12
Freshman Grade Point Averages
Persister and Year 2 Transfers

Representative Group	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Persister	2.6	2.6
Transfer	1.7*	1.7*
Black Group		
Persister	2.1	2.2
Transfer	1.4*	1.3*

*p<.05

FRESHMAN AND SOPHOMORE GRADES: YEAR 3 TRANSFERS

Are the grades of year 3 transfers more similar to year 3 persisters? Because these students have been enrolled at the University longer, approximately two years of grade point averages will be compared instead of one.

A look at the Representative Group transfers reveals that while transfers are earning lower grades than persisters in their first semester at UMCP, these transfers are well above the mimimum required for graduation from the University: the mean GPA for Representative Group transfers is 2.2 compared to 2.6 average for students who remain enrolled in the third year of the study. Black Group transfers have earned an average grade point of 1.6 in their first semester at UMCP. Black Group persisters on the other hand have earned grade point averages of 2.1. These differences are statistically significant.

Looking at the next three semesters (spring of the students' freshman year, fall and spring of their second year at UMCP) indicates the same pattern of GPA's noted earlier: while transfers continue to earn lower grades than persisters, the differences are not statistically significant. Black Group transfers continue to earn less than a 2.00 over this period: significantly lower grades than Black Group persisters. Thus the role of low grade point average as a factor in the decision to transfer appears to be more salient for the Black Group. Year 3 transfers in the Representative Group are earning grades satisfactory enough to permit their eventual graduation; transfers in the Black Group are not. Table 13 below reports the grade point averages of the freshman year of the year 3 transfers and UMCP persisters.

TABLE 13
Freshman Grade Point Averages
Persister and Year 3 Transfers

Representative Group	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Persister	2.6	2.6
Transfer	2.2*	2.3
Black Group		
Persister	2.1	2.2
Transfer	1.6*	1.7

*p<.05

Social Life Satisfaction

While lack of academic satisfaction or performance are two reasons often cited for transferring from a college or university, dissatisfaction with social life is another factor which should also be considered. Having enough casual acquaintances and a number of close friends may be vital in weathering the vicissitudes of college life. Therefore, MLS participants were asked about their involvement and satisfaction with their social lives.

SOCIAL LIFE: YEAR 2 TRANSFERS

Because of the importance of social life and making interpersonal connections early on in a student's college experience, year 2 transfers were asked about their satisfaction with social life during their freshman

year. They rated their social life on a 7 point scale: **1** = poor, not much social life; **2** = not as good as could have been **3** = average, OK, satisfied **4** = good, met new friends, better than expected **5** = very good **6** = other and **7** = not involved by choice.

Year 2 Representative Group transfers appeared much more dissatisfied with their social lives in their freshman year compared to students who would persist at UMCP. Twenty percent rated their social lives as poor, "not meeting many people," compared to persisters (10% gave that response). Seventeen percent of persisters and 22% of Representative Group transfers reported being satisfied or that their social lives were "as expected." A higher percentage of persisters reported their social lives as being "good", or "better than expected" compared to transfers (34% versus 20%). Equal percentages of persisters and transfers reported being very satisfied with their social lives (24% of persisters and transfers).

A look at Black Group transfers in the second year of MLS, suggests that they are about as dissatified with their social life in the freshman year as Black Group persisters (6% of Black Group transfers compared to 7% of Black Group persisters). Black Group persisters were less likely than Black Group transfers to indicate an "average, OK" social life (26% compared to 36%); however almost 56% of persisters reported their social lives as being good or very good compared to only 36% of Black Group freshmen who would become transfers in the second year of the study.

SOCIAL LIFE: YEAR 3 TRANSFERS

Do the year 3 transfers resemble the year 2 transfers in social life satisfaction? As freshmen, students in the Representative Group who would transfer out by the third year of MLS were more likely to report dissatisfaction with their social lives: 20% reported "poor" or "not as good as expected" social lives compared to 9% of freshmen who would persist. On the upper end of the scale, 58% of future persisters reported that their social lives were "better than expected" or "very good" compared to 44% of future Representative Group transfers.

What about in their sophomore year? Are students who will become transfers in the third year more likely to be dissatisfied than persisters with their social lives the year prior to their transfer? The data indicate that the pattern of satisfaction of future persisters and transfers is almost identical. Ten percent of students who will persist are very dissatisfied with their social lives; 15% of students who will transfer report this level of dissatisfaction. On the upper end of the scale, slightly higher percentages of persisters report "very good" social lives (19%) compared to 14% of future transfers.

Black Group transfers in year 3 are less likely to report high degrees of satisfaction with their social lives as freshmen than students who persist. Twelve percent of future Black Group transfers indicate "poor" social lives compared to 7% of future Black Group persisters. Future Black Group persisters are also more likely to report the highest level of satisfaction about their social lives (26% = "very good") compared to 4% of future Black Group transfers. Looking back to the year prior to their transfer, 19% of Black Group transfers say their social lives were "poor" (compared to 6% of blacks who will persist). Indeed, 45% of blacks who will persist report that their social lives were "good, better than exected" compared to 13% of blacks who will transfer from the University.

HIGH POINTS DURING THE COLLEGE YEARS

MLS participants were asked to describe the experience they remembered as most pleasurable or with greatest satisfaction. High point experiences were coded under the following general categories: **1** = No highpoint experience identified, **2** = Academics, **3** = Interpersonal, **4** = Work related, **5** = Vacation, trip, **6** = Personal leadership/competence, **7** = Other personal development, **8** = Other.

High Points: Year 2 Transfers

Are there differences between students who will continue to be enrolled at UMCP and those who will transfer in the nature of the experiences they identify as satisfying? Again given the significance of the freshman year in later decisions to dropout or transfer, year 2 transfers' freshman responses will be compared to the freshman responses of students who will remain UMCP persisters.

Looking back from year 2, Representative Group persisters indicated their most satisfying experience during their freshman year was in the area of academics (34%). This was followed by responses in the personal leadership or competence area (15%) and success in interpersonal relationships (14%). Similarly students who would be transfers in the second year of MLS also identified academics as their most satisfying experience (39%); also like persisters, this source of satisfaction was followed by personal leadership/competence (17%) and interpersonal experiences (13%). Ranking high as another positive experience was the category of vacations or trips for both groups (about 13% each). In general, the freshman high points of Representative Group persisters and transfers were very similar.

Are the same freshman high points identified by the Black Group? As was done with the Representative Group, Black Group transfers in year 2 were compared to Black Group UMCP persisters.

Black students who would transfer after their freshman year had rated the same categories of "peak" experiences as did Black Group persisters. Their high point experiences as freshmen also included academics (45%) and personal leadership or competence experiences (21%). Interpersonal experiences (8%) and trips or vacations (2%) were not significant sources of satisfaction for Black Group transfers in their freshman year.

Unlike the Representative Group, a higher percentage of responses of Black Group members to this item was coded "Other." Twelve percent of Black Group persisters and slightly over 9% of Black Group transfers' responses were thusly coded. This contrasts with the Representative Group's generally lower response rate (6-8%) in this category. Consequently, the high point categories used to code this item may not be fully capturing what the Black Group found most satisfying or pleasurable their freshman year.

High Points the Year before Transfer: Year 3 Transfers

Representative Group transfers in year 3, did not identify academics as a high point experience in the year prior to their transfer (the second year of MLS) as often as students who would persist (11% versus 4%). Interpersonal experiences were rated highest by future transfers (36%). Future persisters also rated this category highly (27%), however, vacations and other trips were also frequently selected high points (28%).

Black Group transfers were more likely to report interpersonal relationships instead of academics as their high point the year prior to their transfer from UMCP (42% reported interpersonal, compared to 8% who reported academics). Academics were a high point for 14% of Black Group students who would persist to the third year of MLS; 29% reported interpersonal high points. Vacations or trips were identified as high points by 17% of Black Group future persisters compared to 8% of Black Group future transfers.

LOW POINTS DURING THE COLLEGE YEARS

Are there differences between students who persist at UMCP and those who transfer in terms of areas of emotional conflict or negative experiences? Sophomore persisters and year 2 transfers were asked about any negative experiences which had occurred during their freshman year.

Low Points: Year 2 Transfers

Considering persisters in the Representative Group first, the five experiences identified as causing the most emotional conflict included **(1)** separating from relationships including breakups, leaving friends to go to school (22%); **(2)** academic pressure, including exams, grades or workload (13%); **(3)** other (13%); **(4)** conflict with siblings or parents (8%) and **(5)** illness, injury, or physical problems with self, family or friends (8%).

Transfers rated the "decisions about college" (15%), which included classes to take, areas in which to major etc., and "other" (15%) as the top two areas of emotional conflict during their freshman year. Like the persisters, they were concerned about academic pressure (13%) and family conflicts (9%). Compared to persisters (22%), they were much less likely to indicate separation from relationships as a source of emotional conflict (9%).

How similar are the emotional valleys of students in the Black Group? Organizing freshman responses by enrollment status in the second year of MLS (persisters or transfers) suggests black persisters were quite concerned with separating from significant relationships (17%) and with the pressures of academics (16%). These freshman concerns were also selected by blacks who would be transfer students by the second year of MLS (10% reported separation and 15%, academic pressure). However in total contrast to the Representative Group, and to black persisters, 17% of Black Group transfers indicated the death of a friend of family member as significant source of concern. Six percent of Black Group persisters gave this response. Furthermore, unlike the Representative Group, 13% of Black Group persisters and 19% of Black Group transfers indicated a response which was coded as "other" to this question. Thus, the coding system used in these analyses may not allow a full understanding of the concerns of black students.

Low Points: Year 3 Transfers

Do students who transfer after completion of their second year at UMCP express the same types of low points prior to their transfer as those students who persist? Transfers in the Representative Group identified separation from family and friends most frequently (17%); followed by family concerns, decisions about college, and pressure from exams, papers, etc., (about 10% each). Students who would persist gave similar percent responses, except they were less likely to be concerned about "decisions about college" (14%).

Black Group transfers in the third year of MLS expressed similar concerns the year prior to their transfer: academic pressure was the item most frequently noted (17%). Persisters in the Black Group are also concerned with family and friend conflict (12% and 8%); and separation from family (13%).

IV: WHEN DID TRANSFER STUDENTS LEAVE UMCP?

Students in the second and third years of MLS were asked when they first began to think about transferring from UMPC. Responses to the question included: **1** = Shortly after being admitted; **2** = Shortly after new student orientation; **3** = In the fall ofmy first year; **4** = In the spring semester of my first year; **5** = The summer following my first year; **6** = In the fall semester of my second year; **7** = Following the fall semester of my second year; and **8** = Other.

DATE OF DEPARTURE: YEAR 2 TRANSFERS

In the second year of MLS, the transfers in the Representative Group answered this question as follows. Almost 2% responded thinking about transferring right after being admitted. However, not surprisingly, the students who would become transfers by the second year of MLS, reported thinking about transferring in greatest numbers during the fall (22%) and spring (25%) semesters of their freshman year. Another 14% reported they began thinking of transferring in the summer following their first year at UMCP.

Black Group transfers in year 2 reported somewhat different timing in terms of their initial thoughts of transferring. The bulk reported beginning to make their transfer decision during the fall (9%) and spring (39%) semesters of their first year. This pattern contrasts with the Representative Group. Black Group transfers were more likely to begin thinking of transferring later in their freshman year (almost 40% during the spring semester). Nineteen percent reported they began thinking of transferring in the summer following their first year at UMCP. Thus it appears that black students "suspend judgment" about their decision to transfer a little longer than eventual transfers from the Representative Group.

DATE OF DEPARTURE: YEAR 3 TRANSFERS

Not surprisingly, since they continued to be enrolled at UMCP during the second year of MLS, the year 3 transfers reported also thinking about transferring later. The majority of Representative Group transfers in this group reported thinking of leaving during or at the end of the Fall semester, 1982 (50%). About one third (31%) of Black Group transfers in the third year of MLS reported thinking of leaving UMCP at that time. However, 11% of Representative Group transfers reported thinking of transferring right after being admitted.

V: WHY DID TRANSFER STUDENTS CHOOSE TO LEAVE UMCP?

Reasons

Students who transferred from UMCP were asked to indicate the reasons they elected to leave.
Item responses included:

1 = Inability to enroll in desired courses
2 = Desire to attend a college or university farther from home
3 = Desire to attend a college or university closer to home
4 = Dissatisfaction with the social environment at UMCP
5 = Inability to meet academic requirements at UMCP
6 = Pressures from parents
7 = Opportunity to improve the quality of my program
8 = Inadequate financial resources at UMCP
9 = Racial/ethnic tension at UMCP
10 = A desire to attend college with close friend(s)
11 = Other, specify

Students could indicate up to **four** reasons for transferring. Therefore, in the results below, the number of times (rather than percentage) each reason was selected as a motivation for transferring will be reported.

REASONS FOR LEAVING: YEAR 2 TRANSFERS

Considering transfers in the second year of MLS in the Representative Group first,the most often selected reason for transferring was "inability to meet UMCP's academic requirements" (23 responses). Dissatisfac-

tion with the social environment was cited next (14 responses), followed by inadequate financial resources (9 responses) and a desire to attend college with close friends (7 responses).

Black Group first time transfers also most often selected inability to meet UMCP academic requirements as one of their reasons for transferring (this item was selected 28 times). The second most cited responses included inadequate financial resources (18 responses) and "Other," (18 responses). Eleven responses were given to the item dealing with dissatisfaction with the social environment. Inability to enroll in desired courses was cited seven times, followed by desire to live closer to home (8 responses). Parental pressure and racial or ethnic tension were each cited as reasons for transferring five times.

Because earlier analyses suggested black women may provide different responses than black men, the reasons students gave for transferring from UMCP were broken down by sex for the Black Group. The findings showed that black male and black female second year transfers gave very similar reasons for leaving. Both groups indicated an inability to meet academic requirements, followed by inadequate finances as the top two reasons for transferring. In addition however, black women indicated a "desire to move closer to home," a response not commonly selected by black men.

REASONS FOR LEAVING: YEAR 3 TRANSFERS

In the third year of MLS, first time transfers in the Representative Group most often identified inablility to meet academic requirements as a reason for transferring from UMCP (12 responses). Inability to enroll in the desired courses was cited as a reason seven times, followed by "Chance to attend a higher quality academic program" (7 responses). "Other" reasons were cited 11 times. "Inadequate financial resources at UMCP" was identified as a reason for transferring five times.

Black Group transfers in year 3 also indicated problems with academics as a major reason for transferring (9 responses), followed by lack of sufficient financial resources (8 responses). Approximately 15% of Black Group transfers selected the following as reasons for transferring: "Desire to attend a college or university closer to home," cited four times, and "Other," cited four times.

Discussing the Decision to Transfer

In order to more fully understand the transfer student's perspective, several other questions were asked related to the student's decision to transfer. The first of these was "With whom, if anyone, did you discuss your plans to transfer from UMCP?" The response options included people such as parents, friends, faculty members, academic advisors, counselors, spouse and "no one."

Transfers in year 2 in the Representative Group (59%) and Black Group (57%) were most likely to discuss their decision with their parents. Friends were the second most likely source of consultation (about 10% for both Black and Representative Group transfers). Members of the Black Group were slightly more likely to talk with faculty members (4%) and academic advisors (2%) than were transfers in the Representative Group (2% and 0% respectively). Over 15% of transfers in the Representative and Black Groups indicated that they had spoken to **no one** about their decision to leave the University.

Year 3 transfers exhibited a generally similar pattern of responses to this item. While almost 60% of transfers in the Represetnative Group reported conferring with parents, 23% indicated talking over the decision to leave with no one — not even friends (0%)! Black transfers on the other hand were more likely to have discussed the decision with parents (73%) or friends (9%). Nine percent of black transfers reported talking with no one about transferring. No transfers in year 3 reported discussing this decision with faculty members and less than 7% indicated consulting with UMCP academic advisors.

Staying at UMCP: What might have helped?

Transfers were asked to describe what the University could have done to have kept them enrolled. The most commonly cited reason given by Representative Group transfers in year 2 was the response category which included "nothing the University could have done," "no idea what the University could do," or no response (22%); however, increased financial support (e.g. provide better financial aid = 11%) and improve academic services such as tutoring, better accessibility to classes (18%) were mentioned as suggestions. Twenty percent (combining first and second choices of respondents) selected the response category that included "personal issues" or that the student was entirely responsible for leaving and there was nothing the Unversity could have done to change their decision to transfer.

Black Group transfers in year 2 echoed their fellows in the Representative Group. Almost 27% selected the response category that included items such as "the University could not have done anything influential" (in changing their decision to transfer), or "no idea what the Unviersity could have done" or no response. This group also identified increased help with finances (19%) and other personal reasons not involving changes in University policies or practices (14%).

Year 3 transfers were also asked to identify what The Unversity of Maryland could have done to increase their likelihood of remaining enrolled. While the number of responses to this item is small, the trend for students to report that their decision to transfer was entirely personal, and not connected to University characteristics or practices is again seen. Thirty five percent of transfers in the Representative Group gave this type of response. Over a fifth of Black Group transfers in this same year also reported that the University was not at fault (23%); however another 23% reiterated the concern with finances and the need for assistance in this area. Eleven percent of Representative Group transfers also identified improving the University's academic programs as a way of retaining potential transfers.

Compared to year 2 transfers, the year 3 transfers' apparent lack of concern with academic support services is not surprising given the generally adequate grade point averages of these transfers. The response "there is nothing the University could have done" may also suggest that these students are identifying other reasons unrelated to their lives as University students.

The focus on personal reasons for transferring — apart from dissatisfaction with UMCP, is supported by the results of a question which asked these same students: "Do you anticipate transferring back to UMCP?" About one third of transfers in year 2 (Representative and Black Groups) indicated that they did anticipate coming back to UMCP. About one half of the Representative Group transfers said they did not intend to return compared to one third of the Black Group transfers in the second year of the study. More Black Group transfers were undecided whether they would return to UMCP (30%).

The results for year 3 transfers were dissimilar: the transfers in the Representative Group were much more positive that they would not be transferring back to

UMCP: 70% gave that response. Fifty percent of the Black Group transfers gave this response as well. However, even as late as their third year of college, about 17% of the Representative Group and 25% of the Black Group transfers said that they did anticipate returning to this campus.

Transfers' Assessment of UMCP

Finally,transfers were asked, "Now, all things considered, how do you view UMCP?" The majority of year 2 transfers indicated having "positive" feelings about the University (59% of the Representative Group and 65% of the Black Group). The year 3 transfers also felt positively about UMCP: 62% of the Representative Group transfers and 67% of the Black Group transfers indicated this opinion. The remaining percentages of student responses were categorized as "neutral" or "negative."

In sum, these data provide support for the contention that students who transfer from UMCP do so for reasons other than pervasive dissatisfaction with the University. The primary reasons they cite for leaving: inability to meet the academic requirements, inadequate finances and dissatisfaction with social lives are all situations for which they appear to hold themselves largely accountable. In addition, poor high school study habits and lower academic aptitude (as measured by the SAT) also suggest these students' difficulties with academics began before they entered UMCP.

VI: WHERE DID TRANSFER STUDENTS GO AFTER LEAVING UMPC?

Transfers were asked to indicate the name of the college or university in which they were enrolled in the spring of the second and third years of MLS.

Place of Enrollment Subsequent to UMCP:

YEAR 2 TRANSFERS

Approximately half the number of Representative Group transfers reported attending one of four institutions: 21% were enrolled at Prince Georges Community College; 19% transferred to Montgomery College; 8% were attending UMBC and 6% were enrolled at Carroll Community College. The remaining students reported attending colleges such as: Towson, University of Hartford, Catholic University, Rutgers, Villanova, Cornell, George Washington University, Louisana State and Yeshiva University.

Considering the picture overall, 66% (n = 31) of these transfer students enrolled in community colleges compared to 34% (n = 17) who elected to transfer to four year institutions.

Black Group transfers in the second year of the study also reported attending Prince Georges Community College in significant numbers (29%). They were less likely than students in the Representative Group to attend Montgomery College (12%). About 6% reported attending Morgan State University; and 6% reported transferring to the University of the District of Columbia. Carroll Community College, Coppin and UMBC each received 4% of the first time Black Group transfers in the second year of MLS.

Overall, approximately 63% (n = 33) of these students transferred to community colleges. In addition to those identified above, students also reported attending: Anne Arundel, Essex, J. Sargent Reynolds, and Central Virginia community colleges. Similar to the Representative Group, 37% (n = 19) of the Black Group transfers reported transferring to four year colleges. Those most often cited were noted above and included Morgan (6%) and the University of the District of Columbia (6%).

Approximately 17% of the Black Group transfers choose traditionally or predominantly black colleges as transfer institutions. Examples include the University of the District of Columbia, Coppin State University, and Morgan State University.

YEAR 3 TRANSFERS

In the third year, first time transfers in the Representative Group reported attending Prince Georges Community College (11%); Montgomery College (18%) or UMBC (14%). Among the Black Group transfers in year 3, 25% reported attending Prince Georges Community College; 13% report attending Montgomery College.

Overall in year 3, 40% (n = 11) of transfers in the Representative Group transferred to community colleges; 60% (n = 17) choose four year institutuions. The most popular among these was UMBC (14%). In the Black Group, 54% (n = 13) transferred to community colleges, with the remaining 46% (n = 11) having chosen four year institutions. Only one Black Group first time transfer elected a predominately black insitution in the third year of MLS.

VII: SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Before turning to the implications of the findings, each of this report's major questions are outlined and the results summarized.

Summary: Question 1 — Who are the transfer students?

The answer to this question centered around major demographic and pre-college characteristics of students in the Representative and Black Groups who chose to transfer from UMCP. Briefly, **because first time transfers left UMCP in greatest numbers in the second and third years of MLS,** attention in the present report focused on these time periods. The year 2 transfer group consisted of 12% of students in the Representative Group and 20% of students in the Black Group tested in the second year of MLS. The year 3 transfer group reflected about 8% of the Representative and 11% of the Black Group tested in the third year of MLS.

The racial breakdown of first time transfers in the second year of MLS the Representative Group was reported as follows: about 78% were white; 12% were black; 4% were Asian and the remainder were "unknown" and small percentages of minorities such as Hispanic. Representative Group transfers in the third year of the study were more likely than in the previous year to be white Americans (81%). There were six American blacks in this sample who transferred from UMCP. Recall the Black Group, by definition, consists only of blacks.

The **sex ratio** of first time transfers in the Representative Group was approximately 50/50 in the second and third years of MLS. However, a much higher percentage (almost a two to one ratio) of black women than black men transferred from UMCP during that same time period.

In terms of **parental education,** the fathers of students who transferred from UMCP (in both the Representative and Black Groups in the second year of MLS) were more likely to have dropped out of college without obtaining the baccalaureate degree than were the fathers of persisters. In year 3, the fathers of Representative Group persisters earned more baccalaureate and post baccalaureate degrees than transfers; however, the reverse was true for the Black Group. In general, the mothers of Black and Representative Group transfers in years 2 and 3 had earned less educa-

tion than fathers; the mothers of transfers (Black and Representative Groups) were slightly more likely than the mothers of persisters to drop out of college without completing a degree.

Looking back from the second year of MLS to freshman year behaviors, transfers in the Black and Representative Groups reported **working more hours per week in their freshman year** on the average than did persisters. Looking back to the number of hours worked in the freshman year from the perspective of the third year of MLS, revealed no consistent relationship between hours worked as freshmen and transferring from UMCP by year 3.

MLS data provide suggestive evidence for **a connection between on campus work and retention** — especially for members of the Black Group. Black Group persisters in the third year of the study were twice as likely to have worked on campus the previous year compared to Black Group students who would transfer from UMCP.

There were no notable differences in **size of high school** attended between year 2 and 3 transfers and students who persisted at UMCP. However, enrolling in the "academic" track of high school curriculum was associated with later persistence in college for the Representative Group. On the other hand, Black Group transfers were almost as likely as Black Group persisters to have been enrolled in a college prep high school curriculum.

Differences between students who persist at UMCP and those who transfer out in year 2 were seen in several **high school study habits** having to do with self discipline (e.g. turning assignments in on time, making careless mistakes, etc.). Differences in high school study habits between persisters and year 3 transfers were less pronounced, as might be expected given the amount of time since high school.

Transfers in year 2 and 3 appear to have **arrived at UMCP from high school less academically skilled** than students who persist: their SAT verbal scores were significantly lower. Future transfers' SAT math scores were also lower than persisters: but not significantly so.

Students in the Representative Group who would transfer from UMCP in year 2 were more likely to have lived at home their freshman year than were those who would persist. **Persisters in the Representative Group were more likely to have lived on campus as freshmen.** Black Group transfers were as likely as Black Group persisters to have lived on campus or at home in their freshman year. However, living on campus was associated with later persistence for the Black Group looking back from the third year of the study to the previous year (year 2). Sixty-five percent of Black Group persisters in year 3 of MLS had lived on campus as sophomores (compared to 46% of black students who became transfers).

Summary: Question 2 — How were students doing academically and socially at the time of transfer?

Students' grade point averages were used as the primary index of academic accomplishment. In general, **transfers in both year 2 and 3 earned significantly lower grade point averages than students who persisted.** Year 2 transfers earned less than a 2.00 — the minimum required to graduate from UMCP. In the third year, Representative Group transfers had earned above 2.00 grade point average, but Black Group transfers' grades prior to their transfer were still below the UMCP minimum requirement.

Students were asked about satisfaction with their social lives. Students in the Representative and Black Groups who would become transfers reported **greater dissatisfaction with their freshman social lives** than did students who would persist at UMCP; the difference between Black Group persisters and Black Group transfers on this variable was less than the difference between Representative Group persisters and transfers.

Students were asked to identify **"high points" and "low points"** while enrolled at UMCP. High point experiences for year 2 transfers in the Representative Group during their **freshman year** included academics, personal leadership and competencies, and success in interpersonal relationships. The Black Group also identified success in academics and leadership/competence issues (both Black Group persisters and transfers reported these high points in similar frequencies); however, interpersonal relationships was identified less often by both Black Group persisters and transfers than by persisters and transfers in the Representative Group. Students regardless of race or enrollment status in the second year of MLS (persister or transfer) were very consistent in identifying similar high points during their freshman year.

For year 3 transfers in the Representative and Black Groups, interpersonal relationships rather than academics became a significant source of satisfaction the year prior to their transfer from UMCP.

"Low points" or sources of emotional stress were identified by students who would persist at UMCP and by those who would transfer. Persisters in the Representative Group indicated separation from relationships, academic pressure, conflict with family and illness/personal injury as important causes of conflict in their freshman year. In contrast, future transfers rated **"decisions about college,"** family conflicts and other unspecified concerns as the top aggravators in their first year of college.

Black Group transfers and persisters were also quite concerned with academics and separating from significant others in the freshman year. Unique to Black Group transfers however, is a concern with a death of a friend or family member. Family concerns and concern with academic decision making (i.e. what courses to take, whether to stay enrolled at UMCP) are parallel to the Representative Group. Students in the Black and Representative Groups are very similar in their low point selection.

Year 3 transfers expressed similar concerns the year prior to their transfer (the second year of MLS). Representative Group transfers mentioned separation from family and friends, family concerns, decisions about college, while Black Group transfers identified academic pressures followed by family conflict as "low points."

Summary: Question 3 — When did transfer students leave UMCP?

Representative Group transfers in year 2 reported they began **thinking about transferring relatively early on:** 22% in the fall semester and 25% in the spring semester of their first year. This is in contrast to Black Group transfers, fewer of whom (9%) began thinking of transferring in the fall of their freshman year. Many more Black Group transfers reported formulating transfer plans in the spring semester (39%). In general, **Black Group transfers indicated they began thinking of transferring at a later date** than did transfers in the Representative Group. Additional transfers made their decision to leave during the summer following their freshman year. Not surprisingly, transfers in year 3 reported that they waited longer to make the decision to transfer: large percentages of the Cohort indicated

they made the decision as late as their fifth semester at UMCP.

Summary: Question 4 — Why did transfer students choose to leave UMCP?

In the second year of the study transfers in the Representative Group indicated the **inability to meet academic requirements as their primary reason for leaving UMCP,** followed by dissatisfaction with the social environment and inadequate financial resources. Black Group transfers in year 2 also gave these reasons, although financial concerns were rated second, followed by **dissatisfaction with the social environment.** Black women identified the desire to live closer to home as an important component in their decision to transfer. Academic, financial and social concerns were cited in the third yearof MLS, although increasing numbers of students identified inability to enroll in desired courses and "Other" as sources of frustration and concern.

Students who transferred were most likely to **discuss their decision to transfer with parents or friends.** Only a very small percentage (less than 5%) indicated they had discussed this decision with any official representative of the University (e.g. faculty, staff or academic advisor).

Many of the students who became transfers have good feelings about the University of Maryland — they did not consistently identify many things the University could have done differently that would have led them to remain enrolled here. However, students who transfer after their freshman year did note the need for increased assistance with finances and improved academic services — results consistent with the reasons they gave for transferring. Finally, **a substantial percentage indicated they would like to transfer back to UMCP sometime in the future.**

Summary: Question 5 — Where did transfer students go after leaving UMCP?

Students were asked to specify the name of the school to which they had transferred. Year 2 transfers reported attending area **community colleges** in significant numbers (over 60% reported attending community colleges such as Prince Georges Community College and Montgomery College). A number of Black Group students indicated they had transferred to institutions which have been characterized as predominantly or **"historically black."** Year 3 transfers in the Representative Group were more likely to transfer to other four year institutions (60%) where as year 3 Black Group transfers were almost equally divided between those who transferred to 2 and 4 year colleges.

Implications for UMCP

While there is no exact prototype for identifying individuals who will transfer from UMCP, our research points out the following characteristics of students who might be considered "at risk":

- **being less academically prepared (as evidenced by lower SATs and poorly developed high school study habits)**
- **having less academic success at UMCP (as seen in lower grade point averages)**
- **having financial concerns (as seen in working more hours than persisters — often off campus)**
- **reporting a less than satisfactory social life**
- **commuting to campus (especially during the freshman year for the Representative Group and sophomore year for black transfers in year 3).**

In addition, this report suggests that black women are particularly vulnerable to transferring from UMCP. Unlike the Representative Group, whose members transfer from the University in roughly equal percentages by sex, black females transfer at twice the rate of black males. The present report and an earlier one on college student satisfaction [4] found evidence to suggest that **black women students in particular, are not very happy with the social aspects of their lives.** Indeed, a secondary analysis of the black students who transferred to predominately or "historically" black colleges, revealed that all of the students were women. Choosing such an environment may be a step toward a more positive social life. Consequently, this report provides support for the contention that the "black women transfer phenomenon" may be positively influenced by attention to their social life needs.

Our data suggests several reasons why black women may be dissatisfied with their social lives at UMCP. When MLS began (1980-1981), **black women out numbered black men at UMCP about two to one.** MLS's yearly contact with participants also indicates that black men are prone to dropping out of college entirely. Thus a reality black women face on this campus who prefer to date black men, is a diminishing number of black men with whom to develop an important aspect of their social relationships. Thus recruiting and retaining black men on campus may positively affect black women's social life satisfaction. In addition, devising ways of encouraging the involvement of black women in a variety of aspects of the University community in order to build other supportive friendships may also have a positive impact on social life satisfaction. Such support may be especially important in light of the number of black women who report missing their families. **Building relationships with faculty and staff** — especially black faculty and staff — must also be nurtured: not only for role modeling advantages, but also because such contact may encourage black women (and other students) to discuss their educational concerns with University representatives — something which our data suggest has not been happening.

In addition to building relationships with faculty and staff, on campus programs which incorporate black women's families may also be effective in minimizing the feelings of isolation many black women feel on predominantly white campuses. "Mother-Daughter," or "Father-Daughter" Days, where the parents of students are invited and involved on campus may be particularly meaningful for black female students. Or sibling "over nights," where parents are involved in arranging for younger sisters and brothers to come to campus and stay over night with their college student older sisters, may offer another opportunity to structure the involvement of black families on campus.

Dissatisfaction with social life freshman year is also reported by those in the Representative Group who become transfers from UMCP. This finding reinforces the significance of Chickering's (1969) notion of **developing mature interpersonal relationships as a priority** for college students and highlights the issue as one that affects students in both the Black and Representative Groups. The fact of transfers' social isolation is supported by the numbers of subsequent transfers in both the Representative and Black Groups who reported living at home rather than on campus in the fall of their freshman year (about 50%).

Other researchers (Astin, 1975; Chickering, 1974) have shown that **commuters have a more difficult time in establishing new relationships on campus** apart from old high school friends and family. This again underscores the importance of helping commuters (Black and Representative) become involved early with on-campus activities and events. By doing so, they may develop and or more easily maintain new friendships

and consequently evaluate their transfer decision differently. [5]

In addition to building on campus friendships and support networks with peers, encouraging students to **become involved with faculty and staff — outside of the classroom,** may pay off by decreased transfer behavior. Inviting faculty and staff into residence halls for programs or activities; or departmental coffees where "majors" or potential new majors have the opportunity to talk with faculty are examples of how such informal interactions could be arranged.

Involvement with peers, faculty and staff on campus, with the positive payoff of increased student satisfaction, may also be hindered for transfers by being employed many hours in various part-time jobs. Our findings show that transfers in both years 2 and 3 work more hours on the average than do students who persist. In addition, transfers are much less likely to work on campus. While at first thought, the significance of working on-campus versus off-campus may not be apparent, some researchers (e.g. Astin, 1985) have suggested that while working does take away from potential study time, **the benefits of working on-campus lie in the increased opportunity for campus identification** and building relationships with students, faculty and staff. Indeed, Astin maintains that on campus work (less than 20 hours per week) is actually a retention enhancer! Thus a recommendation which follows from these findings is increased attention to the job choices of students: attempting not only to keep manageable the hours per week they work but also to encourage on-campus work when possible. In addition, on-campus employers should be encouraged to think about student "help" as not just inexpensive assistance, but as an **opportunity for building a stronger bond between the student and the University.**

The struggle to pursue the baccalaureate can be seen in the large number of transfers who identify failure to meet UMCP's academic requirements as one of the major reasons they left the institution. Thus **the importance of good study behavior,** particularly when work is a competing priority, is reinterated by this report's findings. Programs which help students realize the toughness of their undertaking (combining school with off campus work) and offer guidance for maximizing students' chances of remaining in school may be useful in reducing the number of students who transfer because of poor academic performance. Because MLS's data indicates that future transfers are less well prepared from high school and hence are likely to begin college at a disadvantage, academic administrators may want to consider **a pre-college intensive summer program focusing on academic skill development.** Academic advisors who work with freshmen should become particularly familar with academic assistance programs and how to identify students who could benefit from them.

A final characteristic of transfers which became apparent from this study is the connection between parental educational background and student academic achievement. The fathers of transfers in year 2 — the year of greatest transferring activity, were more likely to be college dropouts than the fathers of students who would continue to persist at UMCP. This finding may serve to highlight **the importance of role modeling** or the need to demonstrate concretely the benefits of higher education to some of our students who may not have had the opportunity to witness the advantages in their own families. Again, significant and meaningful contact with faculty and staff members of the University community may be helpful in validating students' sacrifices and efforts in persisting to the achievement of the baccalaureate.

"Making decisions about college" was identified as a significant conflict or a "low point" more frequently by future transfers than persisters. Significant numbers of Representative Group transfers reported that they began to think about transferring from UMCP during their first semester on-campus. Thus, because many of the students who will transfer appear to begin **critically evaluating their college experience soon after their arrival** and begin to think of transferring, there is a need to reach these students during the early part of their freshman year. Faculty and staff who interact with freshmen, especially in the students' first semester, may need to be reminded of their potential for significant impact on these students. For example, orientation staff, freshman advisors, residence hall personnel, teaching assistants as well as faculty are likely to be among the first University representatives with whom freshmen will interact. **Do these individuals realize their role in the University's retention efforts? Are they knowledgeable of the University's resources for students in terms of academic, financial and personal assistance?** Increasing the awareness and sensitivity of these University personnel to both their opportunity for positive student impact and campus resources would go far in helping students establish a positive connection with the University.

Since additional future transfers appear to make the decision to leave during the summer between their freshman and sophomore years, there is also a need to find a means of establishing contact with these students at this time. Letters to students at home from a variety of offices across campus (e.g. from academic advisors inviting them to discuss any academic concerns or review their academic schedules; from the Learning Assistance Service announcing fall workshops on improving study behaviors or a welcoming letter from the Director of Campus Activities highlighting opportunities for student involvement in new clubs, upcoming fall activities, etc.) may be a form by which such contact may be made. Reminding students of the services and future activities on campus may encourage them to remain at UMCP, or at least to consider discussing their thoughts of transferring with UMCP personnel.

Since transfers reported most often discussing with their parents the decision to leave UMCP, **getting parents involved and informed** of University programs and services may be another effective transfer intervention. Examples might include programs which enlist parent's assistance by inviting them to campus, and familiarize them with University personnel, or parent newsletters describing important educational decisions their sons or daughters might face (seeking tutoring, how to choose a major, etc.) and what resources are available on campus to help. Involving parents in such a fashion would serve at least two purposes for potential transfers: 1) providing actual information about campus programs and services the students themselves may have had difficulty accessing on their own and 2) providing a demonstration of parental support for continued persistence in higher education.

Finally a stuctured, longer term intervention such as **a two semester freshmen orientation program** or "University 10" type course might help potential transfers feel more connected with the University or at least encourage them to explore their reasons for leaving or staying at UMCP. The course would attempt to build campus identification by means of concerned faculty and staff and might include topics such as schedule planning, study skills, library use, time management and exposure to campus resources such as academic advising, the Counseling Center, Career Development Center and the Financial Aid Office. Ideally having students remain in the same class throughout the fall

and spring semesters might facilitate improved social relationships — especially difficult for commuters whose classmates usually change every semester. Currently, the Division of Student Affairs' Orientation Office is coordinating with the Counseling and Personnel Services department, a one semester freshman orientation course (EDCP 1080) which address many of the topics outlined above. Data are being collected to determine the effect of this course on student retention.

Conclusion

In many ways, transfer students are a paradoxical population in higher education. Unlike students who leave higher education entirely by dropping out, transfer students are motivated to continue in school — just somewhere else. While in many cases, the data presented here suggest that students who will transfer resemble dropouts in some aspects (e.g. less academically prepared with significant off-campus commitments and priorities), our data also indicate a great deal of similarity between transfers and UMCP persisters (e.g. experience in residence hall living, like concerns, attending similarly sized high schools etc.). Indeed, substantial numbers of transfers reported positive feelings about the University and **some even had the intention of transferring back** In fact, our records indicate that 10% students in the Representative Group and 10% from the Black Group had transferred back to UMCP by the fourth year of the study; another 7% from the Representative Group and 6% from the Black Group had transferred back by the fifth year of MLS [6].

Because of the similarity between transfers and persisters and the fact that transfers do not give up on higher education entirely by dropping out, educators in general do not give transfer students the same thought and attention as dropouts. **Educators may assume that transferring will result in a better person/environment fit which in turn will increase the chances of a student's satisfaction and eventual graduation from college.** Our research indicates that the few available studies about students who transfer focus on those who transfer **into** the institution under study, not those who transfer **out** and go to school elsewhere. Thus there is a lack of empirical information about the reasons transfer students leave their colleges of matriculation and if, in fact, they do find a better "fit" at their new transfer college or university.

However, the information presented here about transfers can be used to fill in this knowledge gap — **at least for UMCP.** Since over half of the transfers studied by MLS did not elect to transfer for a better personal (and unknown to us) "fit," but rather for reasons of academic or financial necessity and social dissatisfaction, we can elect to intervene with programs and activities such as those suggested above. Recognizing that substantial numbers of students transfer from UMCP because of reasons we can do something about, should enable us to give this population of students the kind of attention that would help them remain enrolled in higher education — at The University of Maryland College Park.

Note: The experiences of transfer students, including their satisfaction with their new college as well as their enrollment pathways subsequent to UMCP (e.g., dropping out of college, transferring again or graduating from their transfer institution) will be covered in a future MLS report.

END NOTES

[1] If you have not received a copy of the introductory Maryland Longitudinal Study report which fully describes the study, instruments used, populations studied, write: Maryland Longitudinal Study, the University of Maryland, 2108 North Administration Building, College Park, MD 20742.

[2] In MLS Report #1, 2 and 3, the "Representative Group" was referred to as the "Representative Sample."

[3] Significance was determined using the .05 level of significance and the statistical procedure of analysis of variance.

[4] MLS Report #2 *Understanding and Increasing Students' Satisfaction with College* more fully discusses students satisfaction with their UMCP experience. If you would like a copy, please write: Maryland Longitudinal Study, The University of Maryland, 2108 North Administration Building, College Park, MD 20742.

[5] MLS Report #3: *The Freshman Experience at UMCP: Comparing Commuter and Resident Students* more fully discusses the commuter experience at UMCP. If you would like a copy, please write: Maryland Longitudinal Study, The University of Maryland, 2108 North Administration Building, College Park, MD 20742.

[6] These percentages are probably an underestimate of the number of students who have transferred back to UMCP because the figures reported include only those students for whom we have collected data every year of MLS. Hence, students who have stopped participating in the study, or for whom we lost contact for a year or so, but who may have transferred back, are not included in the percentages reported.

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MLS RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH REPORT #6

Maryland Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM UMCP: DO THEY FIND WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The focus of this report is a follow up of students (Transfer II's) who have transferred from UMCP and were studied as a part of the Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS). The first transfer report (**MLS Research Highlights #4: Students Who Transfer from UMCP**) suggested that educators may not be as concerned with students who transfer, compared to students who drop out of college entirely, because transfer students are believed to be retained in the higher educationa. system (just not at their original college of matriculation). Secondly, transferring is often assumed to result in a better person/environment fit between the student and his/her new academic institution. The present report investigates whether these former UMCP students are more satisfied at their new transfer college or university in terms of the following:

Social Life Satisfaction:

The majority of Transfer II's reported being satisfied with their social lives. Large differences between Transfer II's in the Representative and Black Groups were not apparent. While some students claimed moderate and high degrees of involvement on their new campuses, the numbers who were socially satisfied were greater than the numbers who reported high degrees of campus involvement.

Academic Performance:

Transfer II's appeared to be doing well academically at their new transfer institutions. Their self reported grade point averages were almost all above the 2.00 minimum required by many colleges to remain enrolled or to graduate. Impressive numbers said that they kept up with their reading assignments and planned to earn degrees beyond the baccalaureate. They also appeared pleased with their academic environment, reporting that their classes were sources of support, faculty cared about them and that they obtained adequate oral feedback about their work. On the negative side, academic advising was given low ratings by these students.

Financial Concerns:

While about half of the Black Group and over one third of the Representative Group Transfer II's indicated that finances were a major source of concern, working long hours appeared to ease the likelihood of dropping out of college due to insufficient finances.

Overall Satisfaction:

Substantial numbers of Transfer II's appeared to be satisfied with their transfer institution. Over 50% would reselect the same college, although Black Group transfers were less likely to do so (in year 3 of MLS). Over half the transfers in both groups indicated that they had not even thought of leaving their current college. Their reasons for remaining enrolled centered on the importance of a college degree for future success.

Academic Pathways after UMCP:

Once students have left an institution, it is usually difficult to track their academic progress. While relying on relatively small numbers, MLS data suggest that 1) as a group, Black Group Transfer II's were more likely than the Representative Group Transfer II's to continue to transfer among institutions after leaving UMCP; 2) Black Group Transfer II's were more likely than Representative Group Transfer II's to report attending 2 year colleges even as late as the fifth year of MLS; 3) movement from one institution to another decreased with time and 4) transferring did not result in a "better fit" for every student : some did drop out of their transfer colleges and universities.

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Maryland Longitudinal Study Steering Committee
Division of Student Affairs
The University of Maryland College Park
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STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM UMCP: DO THEY FIND WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR?

INTRODUCTION

A previous Maryland Longitudinal Study report (MLS) **Research Report #4: Students Who Transfer from UMCP** described characterisitics of students who transferred from UMCP.[1] In that report it was noted transfer students are of particular interest to educators because, unlike students who drop out of college entirely, transfer students demonstrate their commitment to higher education through continued enrollment—although not at the original college of matriculation. Transfers also represent a group of students who are often overlooked targets for retention efforts. As colleges and universities struggle to maintain enrollments, focusing effort on currently enrolled students and attempting to avoid their transfer may become as important as attracting new freshmen.

The report ended by noting that many educators assume that transfers who leave find a better "person/environment fit," and thus are retained in the higher educational system. However, since contact with the student is usually lost after transferring, the validity of this assumption is seldom assessed.

The intent of the present report is to follow transfer students in their second year of enrollment at their transfer institution to determine whether or not they did find this hypothesized "better fit."

More specifically, the following concerns or issues will be examined:

1) Because transfers identified "dissatisfaction with campus social life" as a major reason for transferring, transfers' satisfaction with friendships and involvement at their new institution will be explored.

2) Because transfers identified "failure to meet UMCP academic requirements" as a major reason for transferring, the academic performance of transfers at their new transfer institution will be examined.

3) Because transfers identified "insufficient finances" as a major reason for transferring, this report will describe the financial situation of these students subsequent to their departure from UMCP.

In addition to the above mentioned central questions, the issue of transfer students' satisfaction with their new institution will be addressed including whether they considered transferring again, dropping out of college entirely or returning to UMCP. The final section of this report will outline conclusions, highlight whether transfers did find a better fit in their new college and suggest implications for higher education.

I. DESCRIPTION OF STUDENTS AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Since a complete description of the Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) can be found in MLS **Research Report #1: A Descriptive Overview,**[2] only two descriptive aspects of the study relevant to the present report will be discussed here.

The students who provided the data for this report were transfers who have spent at least one academic year at their transfer institution. Our first transfer report focused on students in their first year of transfer (Transfer I's); this second transfer report uses data collected from "Transfer II's" or students in at least their second year of enrollment at a transfer institution.

The Transfer II's included in this report were members of either the Representative Group or the Black Group. The Representative Group is based on a random sample of freshman students selected from the entering class of fall, 1980. This group is a cross section of the larger freshman class and as such contains a representative group of minorities—including approximately 10% black students. Consequently, it is important to keep in mind that the Representative Group is not a "white" group, but instead reflects the ethnic diversity at UMCP.

Because of the Division of Student Affairs' strong interest in the collegiate experience of black students on campus and the relatively small number of blacks in the freshman class of 1980-81, all black freshmen not included in the Representative Group were also invited to participate in MLS. Those black students who agreed to participate became members of the "Black Group."

For purposes of analysis, the Black Group (consisting of all the black freshmen not already selected as part of the Representative Group as well as the black students in the Representative Group), constituted the black individuals studied in this report. Using data from the black students in the Representative Group and adding them into the Black Group was done for two reasons. First, as large a group as possible was desirable because of the relatively small numbers of black students in the original freshman class, and attrition over the years of the longitudinal study reduces the number of study participants. Second, the intention in the selection of the Black Group was the testing of the total available (and willing) population, rather than of a specified "sample" as was the case with the Representative Group. Consequently, the black students in the Representative Group did "double duty" in these analyses by being members of the Black Group and members of the Representative Group.

Data used in this report were collected as part of yearly face-to-face interviews with MLS participants and yearly written surveys. The responses of the Representative and Black Groups will be reported separately throughout this report.

II. SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSFER II's

In order to obtain a better picture of the students who will be discussed in this report, the following characteristics will be outlined: (1) percentage of Transfer II's, (2) sex breakdown of Transfer II's in the Representative and Black Groups, (3) percentage who transferred into a 2 or 4 year college, and (4) place of residence while enrolled at their transfer institution. For a more detailed description of transfer characteristics, see MLS **Research Report #4: Students Who Transfer From UMCP.**

Percentage of Transfer II's

As noted in the previous report on transfers, the majority of freshman transfer activity occurred at the end of the semester, and during the summer between the freshman and sophomore years. The fall semester of the sophomore year was also a period of high transfer activity. Thus because the number of Transfer I's was small in year 1 of MLS, the number of Transfer II's was also small in the second year of MLS (less than 2% of the students studied in that year in both the Representative and Black Groups).

However, in the third year of MLS, the cumulative total of Transfer II's in both the Representative and Black Groups had increased. Transfer II's totaled about 10% of the Representative Group students tested (n = 39) and 17% of the Black Group tested in that year (n = 39).

By the time of the fourth year of MLS, the cumulative total of Transfers II's in both the Representative and Black Groups had further increased. Slightly over 12% (n = 44) of the Representative Group students and 25% of the Black Group students were classified as Transfer II's (n = 50) in that fourth year.

Finally, in year 5, 11% of Representative Group students (n = 32) and 21% of Black Group students (n = 32) were classified as Transfer II's. It is important to understand in viewing these figures (especially during the later years of the study) that they do not represent entirely new students each year. Once transfers entered their second year of

enrollment at a transfer institution, they were classified as Transfer II's; if these students were still enrolled in the transfer college or university at the time of MLS testing the following year, they were again classified as Transfer II's. In other words, MLS did not classify students as Transfer III's or Transfer IV's etc. Thus, the increasing percentage of Transfer II's in years 3, 4 and 5 of MLS represents "new" students to the Transfer II status in that year as well as students previously classified as Transfer II's who are still enrolled at their transfer institution. The focus of the present report will be Transfer II's in years 3 and 4 for the following reasons: (a) the Transfer II's in year 5 are largely the same individuals as year 4 Transfer II's and (b) the data gathered in year 5 (the last year of the study) is mostly a retrospective review of the collegiate experience.

Sex Breakdown

In the third year of the study, females were more likely than males to be Transfer II's in both the Representative and Black Groups. Sixty-two percent of Representative Group Transfer II's were women (n = 24); 38% (n = 15) were males. This unequal proportion is more dramatic in the Black Group where 72% (n = 28) of Transfer II's were women compared to 28% (n = 11) men.

In the fourth year of the study, more women than men were found among Transfer II's: in the Representative Group, 66% (n = 29) were females, 34% (n = 15) were males. In the Black Group, 76% of Transfer II's were women (n = 38), only 24% were men (n = 12).

Where Enrolled: Two versus Four Year Colleges

Tracking the academic pathways of transfers will be discussed in Section IV of this report. However the table below provides a sense of where the transfers were attending school at the time of MLS testing in the third and fourth years of the study. Several students did not complete the question identifying the **name** of their transfer institution and are classified in the table below as "Missing data."

TABLE 1

Type of Transfer School Attended

Year 3 Transfer II's

	Representative Group n %	Black Group n %
Two year institutions	16 (41)	16 (41)
Four year institutions	20 (51)	20 (51)
Missing data	3 (7)	3 (7)

Year 4 Transfer II's

	Representative Group n %	Black Group n %
Two year institutions	10 (23)	16 (33)
Four year institutions	28 (64)	33 (67)
Missing data	6 (13)	1 (1)

Place of Residence

Given the impact of a student's place of residence during the college years on his/her collegiate experience (Chickering, 1974; MLS **Research Report #3: The Freshman Experience: Comparing Commuters and Residents**), Transfer II's were asked to identify where they lived during each year of the study.

In the third year of the study, the majority of Transfer II's in both the Representative and Black Groups reported living at home (59% of the Representative Group and 64% of the Black Group transfers). About 20% of transfers in both groups indicated that they shared an apartment, etc. Five students (13%) in the Representative Group and one (3%) in the Black Group reported living in the residence halls of their transfer college or university.

In the fourth year, the highest percentage of Tranfer II's again reported living at home (33% of Representative Group and 58% of Black Group transfers.) However, increasing numbers were living off campus in their own apartments, etc. About 35% of the Representative Group and 22% of Black Group transfers lived in their own houses or apartments—either by themselves or with roommates.

Very small percentages of these students reported living in campus residence halls. Because a substantial number were attending community colleges which often do not provide on campus housing, this may not be surprising. However, given the importance many educators place on the residential experience in promoting student interpersonal tolerance, independence and maturity (Astin, 1979; Chickering, 1974), the lack of opportunity for an on-campus experience may be viewed by some as unfortunate. Indeed, one often cited reason given by transfers for leaving UMCP (See MLS **Research Report #4: Students who Transfer from UMCP**) was lack of social life satisfaction. That report further indicated many students who would become transfers did not live on campus (e.g. in the second year of the study, about 60% of Representative Group transfers and about half of Black Group transfers reported living off UMCP's campus in their freshman year.) Hence these students appear to miss the opportunity for social life provided by the natural communities created in residence halls.

III. TRANSFER II's AND SOCIAL LIFE SATISFACTION

While living on campus may provide an easy student referent group with attendant social activities, the collegiate experience offers other means for students to interact with one another. Realizing that most transfer students did not live on campus at their transfer institutions, and that social life satisfaction was identified as a source of dissatisfaction with UMCP, Transfer II's were asked to evaluate their social life in terms of friendships at their transfer institution.

In the third year of the study, a spread of responses was evident, with roughly one half of Transfer II's in both groups responding "Strongly Disagree" to "Neutral" and the other one half "Agreeing" or "Strongly Agreeing" that they had developed personal friendships.

By the fourth year, students were more likely to report having developed friendships: 71% of Representative Group Transfer II's and 62% of Black Group Transfer II's "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" they had friends on campus.

Transfer II's were also asked to evaluate how much support and encouragement their fellow students provided. The five response options ranged from "Almost None" to "Very Much."

In the third year, over 50% of Transfer II's in both groups indicated receiving "Much" or "Very Much" support and encouragement from fellow students. Black Group Transfer II's appeared slightly more satisfied than students in the Representative Group with peer support (62% compared to 57%). Less than 10% of both groups chose the response categories of "Almost None" or "Little."

Again in the fourth year of the study, Black Transfer II's were more likely to report high degrees of support and encouragement from their classmates (62%). However, 54% of transfers in the Representative Group also indicated "Much" or "Very Much" support.

Because social life satisfaction is sometimes associated with involvement on campus, these students were asked to estimate the degree of their "Overall Involvement" on their new campus. Response options ranged from "Not at all involved" to "Very much involved." In general, students in the Representative Group reported being more involved on campus than students in the Black Group in both years 3 and 4 of the study. See Appendix 1 for a breakdown of these percentages.

Summary:

The majority of Transfer II's in the third and fourth years of MLS reported being satisfied with their social lives. Large differences by Group (Representative and Black) were not apparent. Despite the lack of residence hall experience, these students appear to be

resourceful in meeting their social life needs. While some claim moderate and high degrees of involvement on campus, the numbers who are socially satisfied are greater than the numbers who report high degrees of campus involvement.

IV. TRANSFER II's AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

"Inability to meet UMCP's academic requirements" was also a primary reason given by students who transferred from UMCP. MLS **Research Report #4: Students Who Transfer from UMCP,** reported that students who would become transfers often had significantly lower semester grade point averages than students who continued to persist at UMCP. Transfer II's were asked about their academic experience at their new institutions to determine whether they continued to have academic difficulty. Percentage breakdowns to each of the questions discussed below can be found in Appendix 2.

Academic Performance and Grade Point Average

Transfer II's were asked their grade point average (GPA) and to generally evaluate their academic performance. Their responses were coded according to the following categories:

1 = Poor
2 = Not as good as could have been
3 = OK, average, did as expected
4 = Good, better than expected
5 = Very good
6 = Other

Grade point averages were collapsed into three categories:

—Below 2.00
—2.00 to 3.00
—Above 3.00

Note that these grade point averages were self-reported by students and hence may or may not actually reflect their official college or university grades.

In the third year of the study, a correspondence between students' perceptions of their academic performance and self-reported GPAs was apparent. Approximately 26% of Representative Group students indicated poor or less than desirable academic performance; 14% reported "OK" or "did as expected" and 58% reported doing well or very well. In terms of GPA, 13% reported earning less than a 2.00; 41% earned between 2.00 and 3.00 and 47% indicated earning above 3.00.

In the Black Group, about 19% indicated that academically their performance was "poor" or "not as good as could have been." Seventeen percent were satisfied ("OK, did as expected") and 64% were pleased and reported doing well or very well. In terms of GPA, 72% of these students reported earning between a 2.00 and 3.00, and 25% reported GPAs above 3.00. Only 3% reported earning grade point averages of less than 2.00.

In the third year, Transfer II's were also asked to evaluate their study behavior. The results were consistent with the GPAs reported above. Almost 50% of the Black Group indicated they usually kept up with reading assignments compared to 31% of transfers in the Representative Group. On the low end of the scale, the Representative Group was more likely to report poor study habits: about 31% indicated they were almost always behind or usually behind in reading assignments compared to 21% of the Black Group.

In the fourth year of the study, Transfer II's reported an improvement in their grades and perceptions of their academic performance. Less than 1% reported grades less than a 2.00; 57% of the Representative Group transfers reported earning above a 3.00; 28% of Black Group transfers also reported earning GPAs over 3.00. Somewhat inconsistently with these grades, 70% of the Representative Group transfers indicated doing well or very well compared to 54% of Black Group transfers.

Educational Aspirations

Are these students' educational aspirations or plans for future academic study in line with their academic performance? Substantial numbers (40-50%) of both Representative and Black Group Transfer II's plan to complete college (earn a baccalaureate). Over 25% of Transfer II's in the third year aspired to the Master's degree; in year 4, 48% of Black Group transfers indicated that they planned to earn a Master's; 26% in the Representative Group indicated that response. In general, Transfer II's in the Black Group were somewhat less likely than the Representative Group to report planning the Ph.D. or other professional degrees such as M.D. or D.D.S.

Academic Support

In order to better understand how satisfied Transfer II's were with the academic environment of their new institutions, several questions about support and encouragement from faculty, advisors and classes were asked. These students were also asked how close they felt to their academic advisor and whether or not their instructors cared about them. In addition, the amount of oral and written feedback students received from their professors was evaluated.

Using five point Likert scales (1 = Almost None to 5 = Very Much), Transfer II's in the Representative and Black Groups indicated the support and encouragement received from their classes. In general, these students felt positively about this aspect of their academic experience. At least half of the students in the Representative and Black Groups in years 3 and 4 reported "Much" or "Very Much" support and encouragement. On the low end of the scale, in both the Representative and Black Groups, less than 15% in year 3 and less than 10% in year 4 reported "Little" support.

Students were somewhat mixed about the support and encouragement received from faculty members themselves. Between 18% and 38% of Transfer II's in years 3 and 4 (Representative and Black Groups) indicated "Almost None" or "Little" support from faculty. About 30% of these same groups felt they had received "Much" or "Very Much" support and encouragement from faculty.

These students were also asked whether or not they felt their instructors "cared" about them. In general the responses to this item were quite positive: over 70% of all students in the third and fourth years "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with this item. One way of interpreting the discrepancy between these percentages and those concerning support and encouragement from faculty lies in the possible ambiguity in the term "instructor" used in this question. Unlike the term "faculty" which refers to a relatively precise group, the term "instructor" could include graduate assistants, teaching assistants, fellow students, laboratory aides etc. as well as faculty.

In order to better understand the nature of the contact between students and their teachers, Transfer II's in the third and fourth years of the study were asked to evaluate the amount of **oral** and **written** feedback they had received from their professors. By and large, these students reported receiving more oral than written feedback. However, at least one third of Transfer II's in the Black and Representative Groups indicated receiving "Almost None" or "Little" oral feedback. In year 3, 54% of Representative Group Transfer II's and 46% of Black Group Transfer II's indicated receiving "Almost None" or "Little" written feedback. In year 4, the corresponding results were 30% and 42% respectively.

In terms of academic advising, students were also asked how much support and encouragement they had received from advisors. Reactions to advisors were quite negative—even more so than to faculty. About 45% of Representative Group transfers in the third year of MLS rated the support and encouragement they received from advisors as "Almost None" or "Little." In year 4, over 55% of the transfers in the Representative Group felt this way. Transfers in the Black Group expressed similar dissatisfaction with advisors: 46% in year 3 and 36% in year 4 indicated receiving "Almost None" or "Little" advisor support. On the positive end of the scale, during these same time periods, 28% of the Representative Group in year 3 and 4 reported receiving "Much" or "Very Much" support from advisors. Transfers in the Black Group indicated the following: 18% (year 3) and 40% (year 4) reported receiving "Much" or "Very Much" support from advisors.

A somewhat different question asked students how close they felt to their academic advisor. About 25% of the Transfer II's in year 3 and 4 reported not having had contact with their academic advisor or not knowing who that person was (the exception was Black Group transfers in year 4: only 8% of these students gave this response). Using the response categories "Not at all close" or "Somewhat Close," Black Group Transfer II's appeared more dissatisfied with the academic advising relationship than Transfer II's in the Representative Group. Perceived closeness to advisors increased from year 3 to year 4 of the study. Forty one percent of transfers in the Representative Group reported feeling "Close" or "Very Close" to their advisors (year 4) compared to 30% of Black Group transfers in the same year.

Summary:

Transfer II's appeared to be doing well academically at their new transfer institutions. Their self-reported grade point averages were almost all above the 2.00 minimum required by many colleges to remain enrolled or to graduate. Impressive numbers said that they kept up with their reading assignments and planned to earn degrees beyond the baccalaureate. Students in the Representative Group were slightly more likely to plan doctoral and professional degrees than transfers in the Black Group. In general these students appeared pleased with their academic environment. Many felt someone in their college or university cared about them, their classes provided support and encouragement and that they had obtained adequate oral feedback. On the negative side, academic advisors were given low ratings; and significant percentages of students received little or no written feedback on their work.

V. TRANSFER II's AND CONCERNS ABOUT FINANCES

According to MLS **Research Report #1, A Descriptive Overview,** paying for college presented difficulties for a number of UMCP students who would become transfers. Transfers tended to work long hours, often off campus and many transferred to community colleges with less expensive tuition. Did transfers continue to experience financial difficulties after leaving UMCP? A number of questions were asked of Transfer II's to assess their degree of financial concern. Complete percentage breakdowns to each of the questions discussed below can be found in Appendix 3.

In the third year of MLS, students were more concerned than not about finances. Transfers in the Black Group were more likely than transfers in the Representative Group to indicate finances as a "Major" concern (46% versus 33%). Representative Group Transfer II's were also more likely than Black Group Transfer II's to report that finances were "not" a source of concern (10% versus 5%).

In the fourth year of MLS, this pattern was repeated: Black Group Transfer II's were more likely to report finances as a major conern (50%) than were Representative Group students (39%). Five percent of Transfer II's in the Representative Group reported that finances are "not" a problem; 6% of the Black Group Transfer II's also gave this response.

Student Employment

Given this degree of concern, did these students report many hours of work? In year 3, Representative Group Transfer II's reported working longer hours than Black Group Transfer II's: 47% indicated 21 hours a week or more compared to 28% of the Black Group. The majority of Black Group Transfer II's worked between 11 and 20 hours a week (54%) compared to 37% of the Representative Group.

In year 4, the Representative and Black Groups were virtually identical: about 46% reported working 21 or more hours a week. Black Group Transfer II's indicated working 11-20 hours in higher numbers than the Representative Group (28% versus 19%).

While the results described thus far suggest that Transfer II's are concerned about finances, and many work long hours, is financial pressure likely to cause them to leave their transfer college or university? Referring to a question which asked about reasons for leaving college, 9% of the Representative Group and 16% of the Black Group Transfer II's in year 3 selected financial pressures as a reason for leaving college. Financial pressure was one of the top three reasons chosen by these students; the other items chosen were dissatisfaction with the academic program (18-16%) and feeling lack of academic progress (18-16%) for transfers in the Representative and Black Groups, respectively.

Summary:

While about half of the Black Group and over one third of the Representative Group Transfer II's indicated that finances were a major source of concern, working long hours (about half of students in both groups work more than 20 hours a week) appeared to pay off: relatively small percentages of Transfer II's reported that financial pressure would cause them to drop out of their transfer inctitution.

VI. TRANSFER II's AND COLLEGE SATISFACTION

According to the data presented above, many of the concerns students expressed as motivators for transferring from UMCP were alleviated at their new transfer college or university. Many of these students report greater academic success, more social life satisfaction and less financial pressure. Did this add up to a positive overall evaluation of their current academic institution? In this section, Transfer II's satisfaction with their transfer institutions will be presented. The questions asked and frequencies of responses are provided in Appendix 4.

Transfer II's were asked whether they would choose the same transfer college again. Students in the Black Group in the third year of MLS tended to be less satisfied with their current college than students in the Representative Group. Half the Black Group students in year 3 and about one third in year 4 "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" that they would choose the same college over again. This contrasts with the Representative Group: 39% in year 3 and 22% in year 4 were not sufficiently satisfied with their choice of college to repeat it. Over half the Representative Group in these years "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" that they would select the same college again; 36% of Blacks in year 3 and 58% of Black Group transfers in year 4 endorsed that statement.

In a related question, these students were asked to what extent they had positive feelings about being a student at their transfer institution. Responses ranged from "Not at all" to "Very Much."

In general, and consistent with the question above, transfers in the Representative Group reported greater frequencies of positive feelings about being a student at their current college than did transfers in the Black Group. In the third year of the study, 70% of Representative Group transfers responded "Much" or "Very Much" compared to 24% of the transfers in the Black Group. By the fourth year of MLS, transfers in the Black Group were reporting levels of satisfaction comparable to the Representative Group: about one third of both groups reported "Much" or "Very Much" positive feelings about their new college.

Some evidence of positive feelings about students' current colleges can be found in their responses to an item asking how frequently they had considered leaving. In the third year of the study, over half of the Transfer II's in both groups reported they never or only once, thought about leaving their current college. Twenty-six percent of Transfer II's in the Representative Group and 31% of Transfer II's in the Black Group indicated thinking of leaving "a couple of times a semester." This item was not asked of transfers in the fourth year of MLS.

Transfer II's motivation for remaining enrolled in college was investigated by their responses to the following item:

"If you stay at your current college and complete graduation requirements, which do you think will be the most likely reason for doing so?"

Answers to this item ranged from "college grads get better jobs" to "my parents or relatives expect me to." The most common responses will be discussed below.

In the third year of the study, the following items were endorsed by the highest percentage of students in the Representative Group:

"must have a degree to enter graduate or professional school" (22%); "a college degree is the only way to enter my chosen career" (19%); and "interest in ideas and pursuit of knowledge" (17%). Students in the Black Group chose the following items: "a college degree is the only way to enter my chosen career (36%); "college graduates get better jobs" (21%); "interested in pursuit of knowledge" and "other" (13%).

Turning the question around, these students were also asked, if they had considered leaving their current college, what would be their reason for doing so? As noted above, financial concerns were one of the primary reasons students gave for leaving college (9% of Representative and 16% of Black Group Transfer II's). Feeling a lack of progress (18% of Representative and 16% of Black Group Transfer II's) and dissatisfaction with the programs of study available (18% of Representative and 16% of Black Group Transfer II's) were also identified. Although the focus of this question was on reasons for leaving, it was phrased to allow the respondent to indicate that s/he had not planned on leaving and hence the item was "not applicable." Almost 40% of Representative Group transfers and 24% of Black Group transfers answered in this fashion.

Asking these transfer students how identified with their current college they expected to be as alumni also was designed to assess level of satisfaction. The majority of transfers in the Representative and Black Groups in both the third and fourth years of the study expected to be "not at all identified", "little identified" or were "neutral" or undecided about their future feeling toward their transfer institutions. On the positive side, students in the Black Group in years 3 (34%) and 4 (38%) were more likely than those in the Representative Group (26% and 28% in years 3 and 4 respectively) to say that they expected to be "Much" or "Very Much" identified as alumni.

Given that this question suggests some ambivalence about their current colleges, did these transfers ever look fondly back to UMCP or think of returning? In the third and fourth years of the study, a much greater percentage of transfers in the Representative Group (about 60% and 80% in years 3 and 4 respectively) than transfers in the Black Group (about 40% and 70% in years 3 and 4 respectively) indicated they did **not** expect to transfer back to UMCP. However, even as late as the fourth year of the study 9% of Representative Group transfers and 12% of Black Group transfers said they expected to transfer back to UMCP. Even though many transfers apparently did not intend to return to UMCP, they maintained a generally positive attitude about the institution. Substantial percentages reported "Favorable" or "Very Favorable" opinions about UMCP: in year 3, 54% of Representative and 55% of Black Group Transfer II's endorsed that opinion; in year 4, 50% of Representative and 44% of Black Group Transfer II's selected that response.

Summary:

Substantial numbers of Transfer II's appeared to be satisfied with their transfer institution. Over 50% would select the same institution again, although Black Group transfers were less likely to do so (year 3). Over half the transfers in both groups also indicated that they had not thought of leaving their current college. When asked why they stayed enrolled, a strong pragmatism was revealed: the need of the baccalaureate for good jobs or further education was often cited. At the same time, "the pursuit of knowledge" as an important reason for attending college was not overlooked (17% and 13% in the Representative and Black Groups respectively, cited this reason). Financial problems, dissatisfaction with their academic program and feeling lack of progress toward their degree were given as reasons that might necessitate leaving their transfer institution. Despite many positive feelings about their current college, most did not expect to be very active as alumni. Finally, these students did not generally harbor negative feelings about UMCP: as was noted in the first transfer report, significant numbers still felt positively about UMCP and some, especially in the Black Group, anticipated transferring back at some point to College Park.

VII. THE PATHWAYS OF TRANSFERS FROM UMCP

As noted in the Introduction to this report, a common assumption of many educators is that transfers leave one college to find a better "fit" at another institution. But once students leave their original college of matriculation, it is difficult for that institution to ascertain these students' subsequent enrollment in higher education. However, because MLS is a longitudinal study which continued to track students after their transfer from UMCP, some light can be shed on the academic pathways of this specific group.

This section will contain two parts: in the first, patterns of academic enrollment status of transfers who continued participation in MLS subsequent to transferring from UMCP will be presented; second, the types of colleges and universities they attended will be summarized.

After UMCP: Subsequent Pathways

Two methods of determining the academic pathways of transfer students will be employed. The first method will use a "looking backwards" approach to the data. All MLS participants in year 5 of the study were asked to trace their academic enrollment status (i.e. at UMCP, at another institution, or not enrolled in college) for each semester since the beginning of the study (Fall, 1980). This approach allows for an appreciation of the complexity of enrollment patterns, semester by semester, over time. For example, some possible enrollment pathways are defined below:

a. Transferred from UMCP, dropped out of transfer college; eventually resumed at transfer college or university
b. Dropped out from transfer institution; remained unenrolled throughout subsequent MLS contacts
c. Combinations of transferring, dropping out, ending back at UMCP

Nine possible enrollment pathways were defined in order to track the MLS participants from year 1 of the study through year 5. Given the focus of the present report on transfers, only those pathways which included transferring behaviors will be included in the discussions which follow.

Missing data is the primary limitation of this approach to semester by semester tracking of student enrollment in higher education: if MLS lost track of a participant for the semester in which their enrollment history was asked, that individual was not included in the pathway data. Thus while this approach has the advantage of precision, the size of the group which can be analyzed in this fashion is somewhat small.

In order to compensate for this more stringent method, participants' enrollment pathways can also be viewed in terms of their MLS status at the time of testing each year. Individuals who are "missed" or uncontacted for a year, but participate in the study subsequently can thus be classified according to their enrollment status at that time. Some precision is lost in this method because it is not possible to characterize the missing period of time in terms of the participants' enrollment in higher education. However, it is possible to study a larger number of participants using this method.

Considering the most conservative approach to academic pathways first, the table below reports the pathways of MLS participants in the Representative Group for whom self report semesterly enrollment data are available **for all ten semesters of the study.**

TABLE 2

The Representative Group:
Enrollment Pathway Patterns

	n	Rounded %
UMCP Persister	16	3
Pure Transfer	18	4
Transfer Combination*	14	3
Transfer-Back**	7	2
Transfer Graduate	30	6
Drop-out from Transfer Institution	7	2
UMCP Graduate	224	48
Drop-out from UMCP	12	2
Missing data	140	30
Total	468	100

* An enrollment pathway with several combinations, ending up at a transfer institution

** Transfer pathway where UMCP transfers return to UMCP

The above chart provides evidence that, for the Representative Group, transferring from UMCP was more likely to result in persistence in higher education somewhere (i.e. the transfer institution) rather than dropping out entirely (i.e. becoming a nonstudent). Over [illegible]% of transfers in the Representative Group reported graduating from their transfer institution by the time of testing in year 5 of MLS. [illegible]ed, the graduation rate of transfers may be even higher than [illegible]ted above, because the UMCP graduation rate may include [illegible] of the "Transfer-Backs" who transferred from UMCP but [illegible]ally returned and finally became UMCP graduates. Slightly [illegible]% of transfers were still enrolled at some transfer institution. [illegible] seven students reported dropping out of higher education [illegible]ly from their transfer college.

[illegible]able 3 below presents the same categories as above, but calculates the percentages omitting the missing data.

TABLE 3

The Representative Group:
Enrollment Pathway Patterns: Adjusted Percentages

	n	Adjusted %
UMCP Persister	16	5
Pure Transfer	18	6
Transfer Combination	14	4
Transfer-Back	7	2
Transfer Graduate	30	9
Drop-out from Transfer Institution	7	2
UMCP Graduate	224	71
UMCP Drop-out	12	1
Total	328	100

How do these figures look for the Black Group? The table below outlines the same enrollment categories noted above for the Black Group. Again, given the stringent requirements of no missing data over the course of ten semesters, the numbers are somewhat diminished.

TABLE 4

The Black Group:
Enrollment Pathway Patterns

	n	Rounded %
UMCP Persister	11	3
Pure Transfer	28	8
Transfer Combination	11	3
Transfer-Back	3	1
Transfer Graduate	16	5
Drop-out from Transfer Institution	11	3
UMCP Graduate	92	27
UMCP Drop-out	5	1
Missing data	162	49
Total	339	100

At the time of testing in year 5, Black Group participants also appeared to use transferring as a way of staying involved in higher education, rather than dropping out. Similar to the Representative Group, the number of Black Group UMCP graduates may actually contain several UMCP "Transfer-Backs." However given the large percentage of missing data (almost 50%), important information may be lost. Note too the small percentage of nonstudents for which data are available. It appears that individuals in the Representative Group were more willing to continue to participate in MLS, despite their departure from higher education, than individuals in the Black Group. Thus the percentage of "missing data" was higher for the Black Group than for the Representative Group and undoubtedly included a number of "nonstudents."

Below is a recalculated percentage table for the Black Group excluding the missing data.

TABLE 5

The Black Group:
Enrollment Pathway Patterns: Adjusted Percentages

	n	Adjusted %
UMCP Persister	11	6
Pure Transfer	28	16
Transfer Combination	11	6
Transfer-Back	3	2
Transfer Graduate	16	9
Drop-out from Transfer Institution	11	6
UMCP Graduate	92	53
UMCP Drop-outs	5	2
Total	177	100

Will looking at the enrollment pathways of these students by yearly **MLS enrollment status** provide any additional information? Beginning with the Transfer II's in the Representative Group in year 3, what was their subsequent involvement in higher education?

Representative Group Year 3 Transfer II's: Looking forward to Year 4 and 5

There were 39 Representative Group Transfer II's in the third year of the study: over the next two years their academic pathways are described below. Note that the percentages reported exclude the number "unknown" or "uncontacted" in their calculation; however, the percentage of "uncontacted" is based on the total number of students (known and unknown enrollment statuses).

—11 (37%) continued to be enrolled at a transfer institution in years 4 and 5 of the study
—6 (20%) graduated
—6 (20%) dropped out of school and became nonstudents
—2 (6%) became nonstudents, but then returned to a college other than UMCP
—5 (17%) transferred back to UMCP
—9 (23%) were uncontacted for a year or more by the study; their status was unknown

Representative Group Year 4 Transfer II's: Looking forward to Year 5

The fourth year Representative Group Transfer II's had these enrollment statuses the following year:

—21 (60%) continued to be enrolled at a transfer institution
—11 (31%) graduated
—2 (about 6%) dropped out of school and became nonstudents
—1 (about 3%) transferred back to UMCP
—9 (20%) were uncontacted for a year of more by the study; their status was unknown

Does using this year by year method of tracing Transfer II's enrollment pathways reveal any differences between the Representative and Black Groups?

Black Group Year 3 Transfer II's: Looking forward to Year 4 and 5

The Black Group Transfer II's in the third year of the study had the following statuses in years 4 and 5 of MLS:

—17 (43%) continued to be enrolled at a transfer institution
—3 (8%) had graduated
—5 (13%) dropped out of school and became nonstudents in year 4 (by year 5, one had transferred again, one remained out of school, and the statuses of the others were unknown)
—3 (10%) became nonstudents in year 5
—11 (30%) were uncontacted for a year or more by the study; status was unknown

Black Group Year 4 Transfer II's: Looking forward to Year 5

Looking forward from Transfer II's in year 4 to their enrollment status the following year revealed:

—25 (71%) continued to be enrolled at a transfer institution
—6 (17%) had graduated
—4 (12%) dropped out of school and became nonstudents
—15 (30%) were uncontacted for a year or more by the study; status was unknown

Despite the number of students for whom data concerning their enrollment status were not available, examination of the pathways again supports the notion that transferring for a substantial number of students is connected with continued persistence in higher education, rather than dropping out. However, this approach does reveal that some students do drop out of their transfer institution (between 10% and 20% in both the Representative and Black Groups).

Type of Transfer Institution

While section II of this report indicated the type of institution (2 or 4 year) that transfers attended in the second, third and fourth years of MLS, another aspect of the academic pathways of transfer students is apparent in transfer patterns between institutions. Of particular interest is transferring between two and four year institutions.

In the section that follows, changes in the types of colleges and universities attended by Transfer II's in both the Representative and Black Groups will be outlined. Attention will be given to changes in institution **type** from year 3 to 4 and from 4 to 5. The figures given in this section will not necessarily agree with Section II because the emphasis here is on longitudinal (rather than cross sectional) changes and as a result is more affected by missing data.

Considering first the year 3 Transfer II's in the Representative Group, 7 out of 16 (44%), were enrolled in four year colleges and stayed enrolled until time of MLS testing in year 4. Eight (50%) were enrolled in two year colleges and continued there at least until the following year. Only one individual changed colleges: moving from Prince Georges Community College to University College.

Black Group Transfer II's were a more mobile group: 7 (28%) out of 25 students changed colleges from year 3 to year 4. Three transferred from 2 year colleges to 4 year (from Community College of Baltimore to Choppin State; from Community College of Philadelphia to Howard University and to La Salle University), one transferred from a four year college to a two year (from Christopher Newport College to Prince Georges Community College), and one transferred from one four year institution to another (from Johns Hopkins to Towson State). Due to a coding error, the name of the transfer institution of the remaining two students was unknown.

Black Group Transfer II's were more likely to be enrolled at four year colleges than two year colleges: looking cross-sectionally at year 3, 60% were enrolled at four year colleges and 40% were enrolled at two year institutions. In year 4 of the study, the percentage enrolled in four year schools had increased: 68% compared to 28% at two year institutions (1 individual's school was unknown).

What were the pathways like for Transfer II's from year 4 to year 5 of the study? Considering the Representative Group first, very few transfers changed institutions during this period. Only two students switched colleges: one went from a two year to a four year college (from Montgomery College to Louisiana State University) and the other changed one four year school for another (from UMAB to UMBC).

Looking cross-sectionally in terms of the type of colleges in which these transfers were enrolled during year 4 of MLS, two thirds (67%) were enrolled at four year colleges; one third were enrolled at two year institutions. This trend was even more pronounced in year 5: 78% were enrolled in four year colleges and the remainder (22%) reported attending two year colleges.

Black Group Transfer II's enrollment pathways from year 4 to 5 of the study were almost identical to the Representative Group. Again, only two students changed colleges. One transferred from a two year college to another two year college (from Prince Georges Community College to Montgomery College) and another student transferred from one four year college to another (from Towson to Johns Hopkins). Very similar percentages of Black Group transfers attended two versus four year colleges. In year 4, two thirds of this group reported attending four year colleges and one third attended two year schools. In year 5, the percentage attending two and four year institutions remained the same.

Summary:

Since most colleges and universities have no means of tracking students one they have transferred, the subsequent academic pathways of students who leave their college of matriculation and transfer to another are usually a mystery. The section above, while relying on relatively small numbers, suggests the following about Transfer II's. First, as a group, Transfer II's in the Black Group were more likely than the Representative Group to continue to transfer among institutions even after their initial transfer from UMCP. Furthermore, this group was more likely to report attending two year colleges even as late as year 5 of the study. Perhaps not surprisingly, the percentages of Transfer II's in both groups who chose to attend four year institutions tended to increase with time. As students slowly completed two year college Associate of Arts degrees they appeared to move to four year institutions. Movement from one

institution to another also decreased with time. The cost, in terms of both time and money, and complexity of starting over at another transfer institution probably became too high. Finally, based on small numbers, the data indicate that transferring did not result in a better "fit" for every student. Some did drop out of their transfer colleges and universities and some continued to transfer.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The major question posed by this report was: "Do students who transfer from UMCP find a better "fit" in their new institution?" By considering the aspects of the UMCP experience these students found lacking (e.g., social life, finances, and academics) the data presented here suggested that yes, indeed, the majority of students who transferred did find a better fit. Because each major section of this report contained an individual summary, only a general review of this "fit" will be outlined here.

In terms of social life, Transfer II's were generally happy with the social aspects of their lives despite the substantial percentages of students who reported living at home. They perceived high degrees of support and encouragement from their friends and believed they had ample opportunity to meet new people. In terms of academic life, these students reported satisfactory GPAs and many aspired to post baccalaureate degrees. However, they had some complaints about faculty and staff. For example, substantial numbers indicated not receiving much written or oral feedback from professors. While finances still were a source of concern, the majority of both Representative and Black Group Transfer II's worked more than 20 hours a week (often in off campus jobs) and the number who indicated "lack of finances" as a potential reason for leaving college was not large. In general, these students were satisfied with their experience at their transfer college or university. However Black Group Transfer II's were less so and as a result were more apt than students in the Representative Group to transfer to yet another college or university.

While on one hand, it is encouraging to see the numbers of transfers who remain enrolled in the higher educational system and the numbers who persist to graduation, some areas of concern still remain.

First, the large numbers of students who report working more than 20 hours per week suggest that making school a priority may be difficult for many college students today. Indeed, one often cited reason for dropping out of school identified in the present report was "lack of progress." Also the high percentages of transfers who even as late as the third and fourth year of MLS were transferring to two year institutions, suggests a very slow accumulation of academic credits. Slowing their degree programs down by working substantial hours may have a demoralizing effect on some students and may lead to dropping out.

A potential "Catch-22" situation appears to exist: while students need money to pay for college, too much work takes their attention away from school and the slowness by which they complete degree requirements discourages their persistence. Helping students balance their work obligations and school appears to be a priority agenda for college personnel. Insuring that students are aware of available financial aid and encouraging on-campus, rather than off-campus work are two important pieces of information to be shared with students at UMCP and elsewhere. For an in depth look at college student employment, see MLS Research Report #7, **College Student Employment.**

Despite the necessity of adequate financial backing, Tinto (1987) maintains that student persistence is more refective of the character of students' social and intellectual experiences on campus than of their financial resources. In this context, the large numbers of students who are not satisfied with a vital aspect of their intellectual experiences at college—their relationships with faculty and advisors—is disturbing. The importance of these relationships, both in terms of feedback about academic performance and progress as well as integration into the campus community has been well documented (Astin, 1986; Tinto, 1987). Yet the transfers in this report indicated they had little contact, in class or outside of class, with faculty and advisors (a finding which mirrors what was reported in the earlier report on these students' experience **before** their transfer from UMCP: MLS **Research Report #4: Students Who Transfer from UMCP).**

One of the most natural links between faculty and students is through academic advising. Advising usually offers the student a one on one opportunity to meet with faculty. While the purpose of a particular session may be deciding on a program of study or proper sequencing of courses, during this process, the student may begin to know the faculty member as an individual. Other contacts with faculty (seeking them out during office hours with follow-up questions or requests for assistance) may be easier once the ice is broken during an advising interaction. While "professional advisors" (usually graduate students) are increasingly common on many campuses, delegating undergraduate advising to nonfaculty deprives students of an easy avenue for interaction with faculty members.

In addition to knowing academic requirements (and ideally something about the vocational consequences of their field of study) to adequately advise students, faculty and staff must know something about the college student experience. However, many experts (Cross 1979, Hodgkinson 1974) have noted that as the student body diversifies to include more racial minorities, older and less academically prepared students, the less familiar faculty and staff may feel with them. Although the best source of information about students is probably the students themselves, most campuses collect at least some descriptive background information about student characteristics. For example, admissions offices typically develop profiles of incoming student classes. Many college and university registrars or research offices keep track of student progress from matriculation to graduation. Identifying trends (e.g. increasing numbers of part-time students or changes in the popularity of majors) are some of the data that may be available to interested members of the campus community.

At UMCP, faculty and staff have available a number of different sources of information about the student body. In addition to the Undergraduate Admissions Office, and the Office of Institutional Studies, the Division of Student Affairs is also a source of both quantitative and qualitative information about students. In addition to MLS **Research Highlights**, the Counseling Center produces a yearly research report based on the New Student Census. Incoming freshmen and transfers are asked about their past experiences and their expectations of college life. For example, worries about the transition from high school to college, the adequacy of their study habits and reasons for choosing to attend UMCP are typical questions included in the Census. The University's international students are not left out : the Counseling Center also surveys this growing student group. Students who live in campus residence halls are the focus of another series of divisional research reports.

Appreciating and understanding the student body in all of its diversity—sex, race, academic abilities, transfers into UMCP as well as original matriculants, is a challenge to all faculty and staff. By periodically reading some of the descriptive reports noted here, faculty and staff can update themselves about important characteristics of the students they teach and advise.

The third and final major issue highlighted by this report is the importance of understanding differences in college persistence in terms of race and sex. One of the MLS's earlier research reports (MLS **Research Report #4: Students Who Transfer from UMCP**) suggested that black female students were at greater risk of **transferring from** UMCP, whereas black male UMCP students were more likely to drop out of higher education entirely. This finding becomes critical if UMCP should choose to follow Tinto's (1987) suggestion that it is unwise for institutions to presume to be able to treat effectively **all** forms of student departure. Instead he maintains that "Institutions must decide on the types of leaving behavior and types of student leavers with whom they should be concerned" (p. 155). Thus while the subject of minority student retention is a topic of national concern, at UMCP, MLS data would suggest that black females are a population toward whom strenuous, and specific

retention efforts should be directed. While the earlier MLS report on transferring provided some insight into black women's concerns, UMCP campus personnel and agencies may want to consider how their programs might better serve this campus group. Programs which formally evaluate their services may want to include questions directed toward black women or analyze their results to determine how this group specifically feels about the program or service.

In conclusion, based on the information provided in this report, educators can find some support for the assumption that transferring from one college to another usually results in continued persistence in higher education rather than eventual dropping out. Indeed, the percentage of MLS participants who graduated from college increased by roughly 5% in both the Representative and Black Groups if students who graduate from their **transfer institution** are included with the UMCP graduates. More specifically, MLS data indicates that 53% of the Representative Group participants from the incoming UMCP freshman class of 1980 had graduated from a college or university **somewhere** (e.g., UMCP or a transfer institution) by 1986. In the Black Group, 32% had graduated from a college or university by that time. Finally, this report suggested several areas of concern which are sources of dissatisfaction for students, both at UMCP and elsewhere. Addressing these concerns may not only serve to keep students enrolled at UMCP who might otherwise transfer, such efforts may also pay off by retaining some of the considerable percentage of students who might drop out of education entirely. For other suggestions on improving student retention see MLS **Research Report #5, Students Who Become Nonstudents.**

ENDNOTES

[1] MLS **Research Report #4: Students Who Transfer from UMCP.**

[2] **MLS Research Report #1: A Descriptive Overview.** If you have not already received a copy of this introductory MLS report which describes the study, instruments used, populations studied, etc., write: Maryland Longitudinal Study, The University of Maryland, 2108 North Administration Building, College Park, MD 20742.

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The Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) is a research undertaking of the Division of Student Affairs at The University of Maryland College Park. A significant number of Student Affairs staff have been involved in the study since its inception. A Steering Committee appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs has been responsible for the methodology, data collection, and management of this project. These individuals are listed in Appendix A of the MLS report entitled: "The Maryland Longitudinal Study—A Descriptive Overview: The Study's Purpose, Goals, Features, Participants, and Design."

APPENDIX I

SOCIAL LIFE ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: How are things going for you socially?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Poorly, did not do as well, did worse than in a previous semester, not very well	5	14	2	6	2	5	7	15
2 = Not as good as could have been, could have done better, fair, not as expected	4	11	2	6	3	8	6	13
3 = Average, okay, not badly, did as expected, all right, good/bad points	4	11	9	25	11	29	9	19
4 = Good, well, better than expected, pretty well, pretty good, fine	13	36	14	39	13	34	13	28
5 = Very well, very good, extremely well, really well	9	25	8	22	7	18	10	21
6 = Other	1	3	1	3	2	5	2	4
	n=36		n=36		n=38		n=47	
ITEM: I have some primary relationships (close personal friendships) at my current college.	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Strongly disagree	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	2
2 = Disagree	9	23	9	23	9	20	9	18
3 = Neutral	7	18	9	23	3	7	9	18
4 = Agree	11	28	16	41	20	45	29	57
5 = Strongly agree	11	28	4	10	11	25	2	4
	n=39		n=39		n=44		n=50	
ITEM: How much support and encouragement received from fellow students?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Almost none	1	3	1	3	0	0	2	4
2 = Little	1	3	1	3	6	14	8	16
3 = Some	11	28	13	33	14	33	9	18
4 = Much	17	44	21	54	11	26	24	48
5 = Very much	9	23	3	8	12	28	7	14
	n=39		n=39		n=43		n=50	

SOCIAL LIFE ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: Your overall involvement?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Not at all involved	6	15	7	18	9	21	10	20
2 = Slightly involved	4	10	4	11	9	21	15	30
3 = Somewhat involved	8	21	9	24	15	34	19	38
4 = Much involved	14	36	9	24	8	18	5	10
5 = Very much involved	7	18	9	24	3	7	1	2
	n=39		n=38		n=44		n=50	

APPENDIX II

ACADEMIC ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: Most instructors care about students.	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Strongly disagree	2	5	1	3	1	2	0	0
2 = Disagree	4	10	0		2	5	6	12
3 = Neutral	6	15	10	26	8	18	8	16
4 = Agree	15	39	22	56	25	57	33	66
5 = Strongly agree	12	31	6	15	8	18	3	6
	n=39		n=39		n=44		n=50	

ITEM: Your educational aspirations?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Associate of Arts	3	8	2	5	1	3	0	0
2 = Bachelor of Arts	15	39	19	49	25	57	20	40
3 = Master of Arts	11	29	10	26	11	25	24	48
4 = Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Education	4	11	1	3	3	7	2	4
5 = Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Dental Surgery	4	11	5	13	4	9	4	8
6 = Other	1	3	2	5	0	0	0	0
	n=38		n=39		n=44		n=50	

ITEM: How close do you feel to your academic advisor?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Have no contact, don't know who advisor is	12	31	10	26	11	25	4	8
2 = Not at all close	9	23	18	46	9	21	13	26
3 = Somewhat close	8	21	7	18	6	14	18	36
4 = Close	6	15	3	8	8	18	11	22
5 = Very close	4	10	1	3	10	23	4	8
	n=39		n=39		n=44		n=50	

ACADEMIC ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: Usual study methods: Which best describes you?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Always behind in reading assignments	5	13	3	8	not asked			
2 = Usually behind in reading assignments	7	18	5	13				
3 = Sometimes behind in reading assignments	15	39	13	33				
4 = Usually keep up with reading assignments	8	21	15	39				
5 = Almost always keep up	4	10	3	8				
	n=39		n=39					

ITEM: How are things going for you academically?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Poorly	7	19	4	11	2	5	3	6
2 = Not as good as could be	2	6	3	8	3	8	7	15
3 = Okay, average, did as expected	5	14	6	17	5	13	10	21
4 = Good, better than expected	10	28	18	50	16	40	19	40
5 = Very good	11	31	5	14	12	30	7	15
6 = Other	1	3	0	0	2	5	2	4
	n=36		n=36		n=40		n=48	

ITEM: Self reported GPA	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Below 2.00	4	13	1	3	0	0	4	1
2 = 2.00 — 3.00	13	41	23	72	16	43	33	72
3 = Above 3.00	15	47	8	25	21	57	9	28
	n=32		n=32		n=37		n=46	

ITEM: Support/encouragement received from classes?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Almost none	1	3	1	3	0	0	0	0
2 = Little	4	10	5	13	4	9	3	6
3 = Some	14	36	18	46	16	37	23	46
4 = Much	16	41	12	31	17	40	20	40
5 = Very much	4	10	3	8	6	14	4	8
	n=39		n=39		n=43		n=50	

ACADEMIC ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: Support/encouragement received from faculty?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Almost none	4	10	3	8	3	7	6	12
2 = Little	7	18	9	23	5	12	7	14
3 = Some	13	33	9	23	16	37	20	40
4 = Much	9	23	18	46	13	30	14	28
5 = Very much	6	15	0		6	14	3	6
	n=39		n=39		n=43		n=50	

ITEM: Support/encouragement received from advisors?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Almost none	10	26	9	23	14	33	6	12
2 = Little	7	18	9	23	10	23	12	24
3 = Some	11	28	14	36	7	16	12	24
4 = Much	6	15	5	13	8	19	14	28
5 = Very much	5	13	2	5	4	9	6	12
	n=39		n=39		n=43		n=50	

ITEM: Amount of feedback: Oral	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Almost none	7	18	7	18	5	12	9	18
2 = Little	6	15	6	15	11	26	9	18
3 = Some	13	33	17	44	12	28	18	36
4 = Much	7	18	6	15	8	19	13	26
5 = Very much	6	15	3	8	7	16	1	2
	n=39		n=39		n=43		n=50	

ITEM: Amount of feedback: Written	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Almost none	9	23	7	18	6	14	15	30
2 = Little	12	31	11	28	7	16	6	12
3 = Some	11	28	14	36	15	35	16	32
4 = Much	6	15	4	10	11	26	9	18
5 = Very much	1	3	3	8	4	9	4	8
	n=39		n=39		n=43		n=50	

APPENDIX III

FINANCIAL ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: During the fall semester, how many hours per week did you spend in a part-time or full-time job?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = None	1	3	5	13	10	23	9	18
2 = 1-5	1	3	0		3	7	1	2
3 = 6-10	4	11	2	5	2	5	3	6
4 = 11-15	5	13	6	15	3	7	7	15
5 = 16-20	9	24	15	39	5	12	7	14
6 = 21-30	7	18	3	8	9	21	12	24
7 = 31-40	8	21	6	15	5	12	7	14
8 = More than 40	3	8	2	5	6	14	4	8
	n=38		n=39		n=43		n=50	

ITEM: How concerned are you about finances?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Not concerned	4	10	2	5	2	5	3	6
2 = Somewhat concerned	22	56	19	49	25	57	22	44
3 = Major concern	13	33	18	46	17	39	25	50
	n=39		n=39		n=44		n=50	

APPENDIX IV

SATISFACTION ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: If you have considered leaving your current college, which one of the following best describes your reasons for doing so?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Financial pressure	3	9	6	16	not asked			
2 = Prospect for a job	0		3	8				
3 = Pressures due to parents	2	6	3	8				
4 = Pressures due to spouse/children	1	3	1	3				
5 = Lack of encouragement from professors	1	3	1	3				
6 = Feeling lack of progress	6	18	6	16				
7 = General uncertainty about future	1	3	3	8				
8 = Dissatisfaction with goals and programs of study available	6	18	6	16				
9 = NA/Did not consider leaving	13	39	9	24				
	n=33		n=38					
ITEM: As an alumnus, how identified with your current college do you expect to be?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Not at all	7	18	5	13	2	5	2	4
2 = Little	9	23	7	18	9	21	8	16
3 = Neutral/Undecided	13	33	13	34	20	47	21	42
4 = Much	7	18	7	18	7	16	17	34
5 = Very much	3	8	6	16	5	12	2	4
	n=39		n=38		n=43		n=50	
ITEM: How do you now view UMCP?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Very favorable	8	21	5	13	3	7	3	6
2 = Favorable	13	33	16	42	19	43	19	38
3 = Neutral/Uncertain	12	31	15	40	15	34	22	44
4 = Unfavorable	4	10	2	5	5	11	6	12
5 = Very unfavorable	2	5	0		2	5	0	
	n=39		n=38		n=44		n=50	

SATISFACTION ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: Do you expect to transfer back to UMCP?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Yes	9	23	6	15	4	9	6	12
2 = No	24	62	15	39	34	79	33	66
3 = Uncertain	6	15	18	46	5	12	11	22
	N=39		N=39		N=43		N=50	
ITEM: If I could do it again, I would choose my current college.	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Strongly disagree	3	8	7	18	1	2	6	12
2 = Disagree	12	31	12	31	9	19	9	18
3 = Neutral	4	10	6	15	8	18	6	12
4 = Agree	9	23	9	23	13	30	21	42
5 = Strongly Agree	11	28	5	13	13	30	8	16
	n=39		n=39		n=44		n=50	
ITEM: In the past 12 months, how often have you considered leaving your current college?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = A couple of times a week	3	8	4	10	not asked			
2 = A few times a month	3	8	3	8				
3 = A few times a semester	10	26	12	31				
4 = Once	4	10	8	21				
5 = Never	19	48	12	31				
	n=39		n=39					
ITEM: To what extent would you describe yourself as having positive feelings about being a student at your current college?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = Not at all	1	3	6	15	3	7	0	0
2 = Little	5	13	5	13	7	16	2	4
3 = Neutral/Undecided	6	15	19	49	20	46	15	30
4 = Much	17	44	8	21	13	30	29	58
5 = Very Much	10	26	1	3	1	2	4	8
	n=39		n=39		n=44		n=50	

SATISFACTION ITEMS

	Year 3				Year 4			
	Representative Groups		Black		Representative Groups		Black	
ITEM: If you stay at your current college and complete graduation requirements, wich do you think will be the most likely reason for doing so?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1 = College grads get better jobs	5	14	8	21	not asked			
2 = A college degree is the only way to enter my chosen career	7	19	14	36				
3 = Parents/relatives expect me to	2	6	0	0				
4 = The opportunity to meet/get to know many different people	1	3	0	0				
5 = College graduates earn more money	2	6	2	5				
6 = To gain experience with extra-curricular activities	0	0	3	8				
7 = Interested in ideas and pursuit of knowledge	6	17	5	13				
8 = Must have degree to enter grad/professional school	8	22	2	5				
9 = Other	5	14	5	13				
	n=36		n=39					